

## WOODLAWN;

### OR, THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MEDAL.

BY F. E. F., AUTHOR OF "MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE," & C.

"'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view."—CAMPBELL.

"WHAT are you thinking of so intently, Annie?" asked Kate Leslie of her cousin. "You have not spoken for the last half hour."

Annie roused herself with a smile and answered, "only of last night's opera, Kate—nothing very important."

"Well—and what of the opera?" pursued Kate. "Come, I should like to hear a genuine, unsophisticated opinion of our most fashionable amusement."

"I was thinking less, I believe," returned Annie, smiling, "of the opera itself, Kate, than of the audience."

"And of the audience," persisted Kate.

"Well, Kate, if you will have it, I was only thinking how happy and gay they all looked. What a different world it was from any that I had ever been in before; and what a difference of fate there was between myself and those elegant looking girls who sat opposite to us."

"Ah, the Hautons. They are fortunes' favorites indeed! They have everything—wealth, family, fashion—and elegant, high-bred-looking things they are too. They called yesterday morning, and left a card for you; but Mrs. Hauton told mamma last night that they were moving out to Woodlawn, and hoped we would return the visit there. I should like it of all things, for the place is magnificent, and I am told they entertain elegantly. We have always visited in the city, but have never been invited out of town before: and now I suppose as soon as they are settled, Mrs. Hauton will name a day for our coming. Fanny Elliot spent a week there last summer, and she said it was a continued round of breakfast, dinner and evening parties all the time. Beside invited guests, they have always preparations made for unexpected company. The table is laid every day, as for a dinner-party, with silver, and they have, I don't know how many men servants—horses too in any number, and a billiard-table and library, and green-house, and everything you can think of in the handsomest style."

"And an opera box in town," said Annie, with something that approached a sigh.

"Oh! yes, an opera box, and everything else. They live in town in winter, and their parties are

always the most elegant of the season. The girls dress exquisitely too—they import most of their things—in short, I don't know any one I'd rather be than one of those Hautons."

Annie, who lived in the quiet little village of C—, of which her father was the principal lawyer, and who could just manage to maintain his family in a plain, comfortable, but rather homespun way, was rather dazzled with this picture of the Hautons, and her heart quite died within her at the idea of spending a week in the house of such grand people. She looked upon Kate's fearlessness upon the subject with some surprise—but then Kate was used to such stylish people! How should she, a little village girl, appear among these grandees? And then her dress—that first thought always among women—she almost hoped Mrs. Hauton would forget to follow up her invitation. A few days after, however, Kate entered the room, saying with much animation—

"Here's a note from Mrs. Hauton, Annie, as I expected, asking us to spend a few days at Woodlawn. Mamma desired me to show it to you before I answered it—so what do you say?"

"Just what you do of course," replied Annie. "They are almost strangers to me, you know, so you must decide for us both. I am ready to accept or refuse, which ever you like. I don't care about going—"

"Oh, my dear," interrupted Kate, quickly. "I would not have you refuse on any account. I am particularly glad for your sake, that the invitation should have come now, while you are with us. Indeed, Annie, I consider you quite 'in luck,' so you must not dream of refusing."

"How long are we to stay?" inquired Annie.

"We are invited from Monday to Wednesday, in English style," replied Kate, "which I like. Of all things I hate that indefinite period of 'as long as you find it agreeable,' when half your time is spent in trying to find out how long you are expected to remain, and your hostess is equally occupied in endeavoring to ascertain when you mean to go."

Annie's eyes dilated with surprise at this definition of hospitality, which sounded to her fresh

country cars and primitive notions as something remarkable: but concluding that her cousin was in jest, she laughed as she asked—

"Is it usual to fix a time for your friends' departure as well as for their coming, Kate?"

"No," answered Kate. "I wish it were. It would not be such a formidable matter to ask them if it was."

"Are you in earnest?" asked Annie, looking up in surprise.

"To be sure I am," replied Kate. "You don't know what a bore it is to have a place near the city, Annie, and to have people coming forever, without an idea when they are going."

"Then why do you ask them at all, if you don't want them?" inquired Annie.

"Oh, because you *must*," replied Kate. "Some expect it—to others you owe civilities—and its all well enough if the time of their going was only fixed. Two or three days for people you don't care for, and who don't care for you, is long enough."

"Plenty, I should say," answered Annie, emphatically. "And I should not think, Kate, there was any danger of guests under such circumstances remaining longer."

"Much you know of it my dear," said Kate, in a droll tone of despair. "The less you care for them, and the greater the bores, the longer they stay. But papa and mamma have such old-fashioned notions of hospitality, that they will not adopt this style of naming the days of the invitation. The Hautons understand the matter better."

"I wish," said Kate, the next day, as she was packing up, "I had a pretty little cap for breakfast."

"Why, where is that little beauty you made yourself?" inquired Annie.

"Oh, Annie," said Kate, half laughing, and half sighing, "home-made millinery won't do for Woodlawn. I suppose you'll ride out in your grey dress," she continued, as she opened her wardrobe to take down some of her own and her cousin's dresses.

Now as this grey was one of Annie's two best dresses, and which she was accustomed to think quite elegant, she hesitated and said—

"My grey for breakfast?"

"Yes, it will do very well," continued Kate, supposing her hesitation proceeded from diffidence as to its being too plain. "The simpler a morning dress the better, and grey is always a good *unnoticeable* color."

Annie almost gasped, "if she was to begin with her foulard for breakfast, what should she do for dinner?" but Kate proceeded with—

"Take the sleeves out of your book muslin, and that will do for dinner—you are always safe

in white—and I suppose they'll supply us with camellias from the green-house for our heads."

"Book muslins, short sleeves and camellias for dinner." Annie's heart beat high between expectation and fear. She wished the visit was over, and yet would not have given it up for the world.

Monday morning arrived, and an hour's ride brought them to Woodlawn. As they drove up through a broad avenue of elms, and stopped before a large, handsome stone house, which commanded a beautiful lawn, Annie felt that the place quite excelled her expectations.

Mrs. Hauton received them with great politeness, made a slight apology for her "lazy girls," who were not yet down, and showed them into the breakfast-room before the young ladies made their appearance.

They came gliding in presently, however, looking very elegant and high-bred, with the prettiest little thread lace caps on the back of their small heads, and the finest of white lawn negliges, their whole toilet exquisitely fine, simple and *recherche*, so that poor Annie felt at once the value and consolation of the expression "*unnoticeable*," which Kate had applied (only to her astonishment at the time) to her grey foulard.

The Miss Hautons did not seem to feel called upon to apologize for their not being ready to receive their guests, but only remarked languidly, "that they must have found it very warm," and asked, "at what time they left the city," and were quite shocked too at the early hour they mentioned, and thought "it must be very disagreeable," and Annie was inclined to think from their manner that they would not have risen so early to come and see them.

The conversation became general—if that can be called conversation which consisted of some remarks upon the long continued drought from Mrs. Hauton, with rejoinders on the heat and dust of the city from Mrs. Leslie. Mr. Leslie inquired of Mr. Hauton something about the state of the crops, and Mr. Hauton asked a question or two about the new railroad. The young ladies kept up a little scattering small talk, consisting chiefly of questions as to who had left town yet, and who remained in the city, and when the Leslies were going, &c., all of which Annie would have thought very dull, if she had not been too much oppressed by the novelty and elegance of everything around her to dare to think at all.

After breakfast a walk was proposed through the garden, and Mrs. Leslie and Mrs. Hauton walking on before, the young ladies followed. Mrs. Hauton commenced a long story about her head gardener, who had behaved so ungratefully in leaving her for a place where he could get

higher wages, when she had dismissed the man she had before to take him, because he was willing to come for less, and after remaining a year with her, he had now left for the very wages she had given her first man. But she wound up her story in a tone of great complaint with, "they are all so mercenary."

Annie could not help thinking that if a woman of Mrs. Hauton's fortune thought so much of the additional wages, that it was not surprising that the gardener would not value them less, nor see the great call upon his gratitude for having been engaged at less than his worth. From this grievance, however, Mrs. Hauton proceeded to tell Mrs. Leslie of the number of men they kept at work on the place, and of how much she gave them a day, and at what a cost they kept up the green-house, which after all was of no use to them as they spent the winters in the city, "and the girls had more bouquets sent them than they wanted." Then followed complaints of the property, which were equally pathetic, and all very pompous and prosy, if it did not border on vulgar, which Annie strongly suspected it did. Annie was in admiration of her aunt's good breeding, which supplied her with patience and attention, and suitable rejoinders to all Mrs. Hauton's boastful twaddle, until she even began to doubt whether she could be as tired as she supposed at first she must be, she kept up the conversation with so little appearance of effort.

She did not listen to half of it herself, but whenever she did, she always found it was some long story about the dairy woman who would do what she should not, or pompous details of the price of the luxuries by which they were surrounded.

Meantime the Miss Hautons kept up a languid complaint of the heat, and asked Kate if she did not find it "horrid;" and when Annie stopped to look at some rare flowers and asked their name, replied, "they did not know, the gardener could tell her," and seemed rather annoyed at Annie's standing in the sun to look at them, and wondered at her curiosity about anything so uninteresting. Annie was something of a botanist, and would gladly have lingered over other plants that were new to her, for the garden was under the highest cultivation, but she saw that it was an interruption to the rest of the party, and they sauntered on. She could not help, however, pausing again with an exclamation of delight before a moss-rose tree in full bearing, when Miss Hauton said sarcastically—

"You are quite an enthusiast in flowers, Miss Cameron."

"I am fond of them," replied Annie, blushing slightly. "Are not you?"

"No," answered the young lady, carelessly,

"I don't care for them at all. I like them well enough in winter—a bouquet finishes one's dress—but I don't see the use of them at all in summer."

"Oh! I hate them," rejoined her sister, almost pettishly. "They are such a plague. People who come out are always wanting some, and then the gardener is to be sent for, and he always grumbles at cutting them, and half the time he has not cord to tie them up, and papa sends me to the house for some—if I had a place I would not have a flower on it. But mamma will have them."

"Why certainly, my dear," said Mrs. Hauton, whose ear caught this last remark, "what should I pay Ralston such wages to do nothing? He gets his money easy enough now—and if he had not the green-house to take care of it would really be too bad."

They now came within sight of the river, to which the lawn sloped, and Annie proposed that they should walk down to the beach; but the young ladies assured her both in a breath, at once, "that she would find it very disagreeable," and asking "if they were not tired," turned their footsteps toward the house.

They returned to the drawing-room to get through the morning as they could. After a little dawdling conversation, Miss Hauton took down her embroidery-frame, and began to sort worsteds, while Miss Fanny produced a purse and gold beads, of which she offered to show Kate the stitch. Kate congratulated herself in her heart that she had had foresight enough to arm herself with needles and silk, and so felt equal to meeting the emergencies of the morning; but poor Annie could only offer to assist Miss Hauton with her worsteds, by way of occupying herself.

Fortunately for Mrs. Leslie, Mrs. Hauton's stream of talk was unceasing. She told innumerable stories of the impositions that were practised upon them; was indignant at the prices that were asked them, and yet more indignant when their fortune did not command them the deference she seemed to think her due.

In short, she was purse proud and mean, and moreover prosy, and poor Annie thought she would die if she had to listen to her half an hour longer. It seemed to her the longest morning she had ever passed, and when the servants came in with luncheon, she awoke as from a nightmare.

Gathering round the table, everybody ate, not from appetite, but ennui, while Mrs. Hauton continued her unwearied talk, which now turned on her hot-house and the price of her forced fruits.

Another weary hour passed in the drawing-room in the same way, when Annie, happening to be near a table on which lay some books, took up a new review, in which she soon dipped with

delight. After reading a few pages she was obliged to cut the leaves, she being evidently the first person who had looked into it, when she heard Miss Hauton in the same sneering tone in which she had pronounced her an enthusiast in flowers, ask "if Miss Cameron was literary?" and Annie, coloring, dropped the book, and returned to her wearisome place on the sofa.

Kate found to her delight that company was expected to dinner, and when the dressing-bell rang, the girls returned to their rooms almost in a state of exhaustion.

"Kate," exclaimed Annie, "I am almost dead. I don't know what has tired me so, but I declare I feel as if I had been in an exhausted receiver."

Kate laughed. "You should have brought some fancy work, Annie. If you had only been counting stitches as I have been, you don't know what a support it would have been under Mrs. Hauton's talk. However take courage. The Langtons, and Constants, and Merediths are coming to dinner. Here let me put this wreath of honey-suckle in your hair. There, that will do, but you must not look so tired," she continued, laughing, "or I am afraid you'll make no conquests, and Constant and Meredith are coming with their sisters."

After half an hour's free and unrestrained chat, and refreshed with the consciousness of a pretty, becoming toilette, Annie accompanied her aunt and cousin again to the drawing-room, invigorated for a new attempt upon society.

The new comers had arrived—a stylish-looking set. The girls were in full dress, and the young men so whiskered and moustached, that Annie was surprised to hear them speak English. They were received with great animation by the Hautons, who seemed to belong to that class of young ladies, who never thoroughly wake up but at the approach of a gentleman.

The young men glanced slightly at Annie, and Mr. Meredith even gave her a second look. He thought her decidedly pretty, and a "new face," which was something; but after a remark or two, finding she "knew nobody," and did not belong to his clique, the trouble of finding topics of mutual interest seemed greater than he thought her worth, so he returned to Miss Hauton, and Annie found herself dropped from a conversation that consisted entirely of personal gossip.

"So the wedding has come off at last?" said Susan Hauton to Mr. Constant. "I hope the Gores will be quiet now. Were you there? How did Mr. Arnold look?"

"Resigned," replied the young man, slightly shrugging his shoulders. Susan laughed at what Annie could not very well perceive, while Miss Hauton continued—

"And the bride? How did she look?"

"As brides always do—charming of course," he replied, carelessly. "You ladies, with your veils and flowers, may set nature herself at defiance, and dare her to recognize you such as she made you."

"If Fanny Gore looked charming," said Ellen Hauton, sarcastically, "I think it might have puzzled more than dame nature to recognize her. I doubt whether Arnold would have known her under such a new aspect."

"I think he may have credit at least for differing from others on that point," said Kate. "Cupid is blind, you know."

"Cupid may be, but Arnold is not," replied the young lady, in the same careless, sneering tone.

"It's a shameful take in."

"A take in," repeated Kate, with surprise.

"Yes, certainly," replied Miss Hauton. "He did not want to marry her."

"Then, why did he?" asked Kate. "He was surely a free agent."

"No, he was *not*," replied Miss Hauton. "The Gores *would* have him. They followed him up, and never let him alone till they got him."

"Do you believe," said Kate, with some spirit, "that any man is to be made to marry against his will? There's no force can do it."

"But the force of flattery," said young Meredith. "A very powerful agent, Miss Leslie."

"Then," said Kate, laughing, "every match is a 'take in,' on that ground. Is not every bride flattered into a beauty, till she feels as if she had entered a new sphere? Do you suppose anybody ever yet fell in love with the truth?"

"No, indeed," replied Mr. Meredith. "Truth's kept where she should be—at the bottom of a well. A most ill-bred personage, not fit for 'good society,' certainly."

Then the conversation branched off to other matches, and to Annie's surprise, she heard these high-bred, delicate looking girls talk of their friends making "dead sets," and "catches," and of young men who were "taken in," in a style that, to her ears was quite new, and as she thought decidedly (there's no use mincing terms) vulgar.

Kate, to turn the subject, asked Mr. Constant, if he had been to the opera the night before.

"I looked in," he replied. "Vita was screaming away."

"Is not she horrid?" exclaimed Miss Hauton.

"The opera's a bore," remarked her sister.

"Casta's a horror, and Vita detestable. I'm sick of the whole *troupe*."

"I thought you were fond of the opera," said Kate. "You are always there."

"Yes, we had a sofa for the season, and one



must go somewhere. But I was tired to death of it before it was half over. Here, Mr. Meredith, hold this silk for me," she continued, calling to the young gentleman who was looking out of the window, meditating the possibility of making his escape to the refreshment of a cigar.

"That's right; make him useful, Miss Hauton," said Mr. Constant, as the reluctant Meredith declared himself most happy and honored in being so employed, while he anathematized her in his heart as "a fool and a bore," and setting his back teeth, with difficulty suppressed a yawn, which, however, was evident in spite of his efforts to stifle it. Miss Hauton's animation, however, was more than a match for his indifference. He was not to be let off. Young ladies (and high-bred ones too) will sometimes pin young gentlemen, whether or no. It is bad policy; for Annie heard him afterward, as he escaped to the piazza with his friend and a cigar in his mouth, say,

"What bores these girls are, with their confounded worsted and nonsense."

The evening passed pretty much in the same way. Much gossip and some very bad music; for Miss Hauton sang, and, like most amateurs, would undertake more than she could execute. Annie thought of that "screamer Vita, and the horrid Casta," and wondered what ears that were so delicate and so alive to the smallest fault in others, should have so little perception of their own sins of commission.

"Oh!" said Kate, as they returned at night, "did not Susan Hauton's '*Casta Diva*' set your teeth on edge? Such an absurdity for a girl like her to attempt what few professional persons even can sing. You look tired to death, Annie! No wonder; for between you and I, these Hautons are very common girls. Strange that I have known them for years, and yet never knew them before. Dress and distance makes such a difference!"

"They seem to have so little enjoyment in anything," remarked Annie. "Everything in their phraseology is 'a horror' or a 'bore.' Now, to us in the country, everything is a pleasure. I

suppose it is because we have so little," she continued, smiling, "that we must make the most of it."

"Well," said Kate, doubtfully, as if the idea was quite new to her and very bold, "is not that better than to be weary with too much?"

"And yet you would laugh at one of our little meetings," replied Annie, "where we talk of books, sing ballads, and dance after the piano."

"That is primitive to be sure," said Kate, with something of contempt in her heart at such gothic amusements.

"It's pleasant at any rate," thought poor Annie, as she laid her head on her pillow and remembered with infinite satisfaction that she had only one day more to stay among these very fine, very common people.

"And is it possible," she thought, "that I could be such a fool as to envy them, because they looked gay and graceful across the opera house! And half of the rest are doubtless no better! Oh, for one spirited, pleasant talk with Allan Fitzhugh!" And then her mind travelled off to home and a certain young lawyer, and she fell asleep dreaming she was in C——, and once again a *belle*, (as one always is in one's dreams) and woke to another dull day of neglect and common-places, to return home more disenchanted of the gay world and its glitter; more thoroughly contented than ever she would have been with her own intelligent and animated home, had she not passed three days at Woodlawn amid the dullness of wealth that is unembellished by true refinement or brightened by one ray of genuine wit.

But it was all right. To Annie had been given that which she most prized—to the Hautons, all that they were capable of enjoying.

Would either party have changed? No. The pity, the contempt was mutual, and the satisfaction on both sides as complete as ever falls to the lot of mortals; for Annie had seen the other side of the medal, and the Hautons did not know that there was another side to be seen.

## CHILDREN BATHING.

## A STORY OF CLEAR BROOK.

BY MRS. JOSEPH C. NEAL.

"FANNY, Fanny—where *can* Fanny be, mother?" I heard this as I sat in the window seat, with a volume of Miss Edgeworth's *Rosamond* in my hand. I knew my Cousin Lizzie had searched the whole house over for me, and though it was selfish, I could not bear to break the spell in which I was wrapt, by speaking. I must have been sitting many hours in that shady nook, for I had finished the history of the "Purple Jar"—and with the book closed upon my hand I had dreamed a long, delicious, waking dream, full of fairy visions, and vague, uncertain longings that for the first time found entrance to my heart.

The white muslin curtains swayed slowly above my head—the elm trees before the window rustled in the same low wind. There was a scent of new mown hay upon the air—and the low ripple of a brook stole in with its lulling music. And I who so loved green foliage, and bright blue skies—who had cherished so carefully the clover-tufts, and the yellow dandelions, that sprang in the little stony covert of my city home—no wonder that my heart was filled with a strange delight, surrounded as I was by all things beautiful!

It was my first long visit to the country, strange as it may seem, for my mother was a delicate invalid, who rarely left her room, and she was never happy if her only child was not near her. This summer my father had noticed how lustreless my eyes had grown, that my cheeks were pale, and my slight form began to stoop. So he interceded for me, and the invitation of Aunt Ellen was accepted. I had come to pass the July and August holidays at Clear Brook. I can even now re-call the wild excitement, which increased with every mile of that journey! how I leaned out of the carriage windows, to breathe the fragrant

air, and watched for the mile-stones with childish eagerness.

But I must not dwell on these things, for the tears come to my eyes as I write—to think how all those simple pleasures have palled—and that the fresh, free heart of a child can never beat in my heart again.

"Fanny—Cousin Fanny!"

"Yes, Louise," I answered, at length, slowly coming from my hiding-place, and giving one last longing look upon the beautiful scene.

"Oh, you provoking girl," said my pretty dimpled cousin, who, though younger than myself, had an arch sprightliness that made her a favorite with every one. "I'm all out of breath with calling you, and after all you were going to sleep right here in the library, over a book. How I hate books—don't I, mother?"

"You do not need to ask the question," answered Aunt Ellen, smiling. "I hope Fanny's example will make you a little more studious, and in the meantime you must give her some of that bright color; and the love of play which you can easily spare."

"Ah, don't scold! there's a dear, dear mother."

How that one smile revealed the devotion of parent and child!—and then Louise began telling me her many plans for the afternoon's amusement. "Jane Morris was coming over to play with us, and we were going down to the brook. Mother said we could bathe, or wade at any rate, if we would be careful, and go only at the foot of the hill where it was shallow."

"Wouldn't you like to wade, Fanny?"

"Oh, of all things." I was sure that wading was a pleasure that would enhance all those I had enjoyed for the past week.

So Jane Morris, a shy, yet good-natured little girl, came, and when we had become a little acquainted, by talking about the new set of china cups and saucers which I had brought Louise, and in which tea was to be served on our return—we strolled down the lane, with our sun-bonnets in our hands, and were soon on our way to the brook I had heard singing, in my dream.

I had my first experience in climbing fences that afternoon, as the huge rent in my pretty muslin dress attested. And then we came to the Great Meadow, as one field on my uncle's farm was called. The grass had not been cut, though it was ready for the mower's scythe. I had one dread with all my love for the country, I do not know how it was acquired. Perhaps from those frightful tale, I had heard, or from a dream, for I could remember one in which I had seemed to be looking at beautiful garlands of flowers which festooned a room, when they changed to trailing serpents that came writhing toward me with their forked tongues, and fiery eyes. As I made the first step into the tall grass that same fear came over me, and when I felt it rustling up to my waist I whispered to Louise, though there was no one to hear my cowardice—

"Are you sure there are no *snakes*?" How merrily she laughed as she repented my question to Jane, and though both assured me to the contrary, I could feel, at every step, the glide of some hidden enemy, nor did I draw a full breath until we stood at the top of the hill.

Clear Brook was a small stream, or "creek," as it is called in New York, that grew wider and deeper after it passed my uncle's grounds, until in the village, a few miles below, it swept into the broad mill-pond, and dashed in a sheet of foam over the high dam. Here it was so shallow that the children were frequently allowed to bathe in it, and indeed it was their greatest source of amusement in the summer afternoons.

The girls had selected a most romantic turn in the little stream, where the water flowed over a gravelly bed, in soft, shiny ripples, and the ferns and sedges clustered upon its borders, while higher up the yellow lily laid its broad leaves upon the gentle undulations of the tide. There was a broad, flat stone, just the thing for a dressing-table—and the bank sloped gradually from it to the mimic beach. The shrill call of the cat-bird, and the tinkle of far-off sheep-bells were the only sounds that came to this quiet spot—and when I had peered behind every bush and moss-covered log, I was satisfied that there were no intruders to disturb our sport.

I had been very brave up to the time of crossing the meadow, and thought how much I should enjoy my bath. But now my nervous timidity

had returned, and I felt more alarmed than I cared to acknowledge, when Louise said—

"You're oldest, Fanny, so you must go in first."

I thought it would never do to let girls younger than myself see my fear, so I began without a word to prepare for my new experiment. Yet my hands trembled so that I drew all the strings into knots, and Louise was ready after all before I was. Jane was to keep guard for us, and take her turn when I was through.

So imagine me standing there with one naked foot poisoning over the clear stream, watching the bubbles as they broke and floated off, or the flies that skimmed about the surface. I saw a minnow dart at one of them, and I was sure the poor little fish was waiting to bite my foot. I began to think about leeches, I had heard they sometimes fastened upon people, and it was impossible to remove them. Yet I, a city girl, nearly nine years old, could not bring myself to confess my fear.

"Why don't you go in?" cried Louise, sitting there so contentedly, clasping her round dimpled arms, and looking on with so much mischief in her eyes.

"Oh—yes—certainly—I'm going," and I actually did dip one foot into the water. It was much colder than I expected, and I involuntary gasped, and shivered from head to foot.

"Oh, you won't mind it's being cold when you're once in," said Jane.

"I believe your afraid," added Louise. The last decided me, I summoned all resolution, and almost holding my breath set one foot upon the sharp gravelly bed, and the cold stream came lapping about my ankle. One instant more—but as the splash disturbed the placid water, I saw a long, strange ripple break the surface. A slimy water-snake with its brilliant stripes shot from beneath a stone. I felt the slimy creature trail across my foot—and with a scream of terror fainted. I remember that strange sounds rang in my ears, and a numb, palsied sensation crept over my limbs, as I fell forward into the cool water.

It was dripping from my hair, and I was trembling with cold, though the air was so warm, when consciousness returned. It is a wonder that my cousin and her friend had strength, or presence of mind enough to draw me to the bank. But they were good, brave little girls, who did not cry until they heard me speak again, though they sobbed then as if their hearts were breaking. I had never fainted before, and for a little time could not remember what had happened. But when recollection came, that same sickening sensation returned—and it was with difficulty that I could rise from the bed of grass and ferns on which they had laid me.

There was no doll feast, with cups and saucers ; that night, for I was put in bed the instant we reached home, and laid there for many days, before I could again dream in my favorite nook with the fresh wind sighing about me. But my dear, unselfish little cousin forgot her play and her mischief, to sit beside me in the dark room, and tell me fairy tales, of which she had a wondrous store, and sing plaintive ballads in her sweet, childish voice. But the fever left me better than I had been for many years; and the village doctor, a kind, old-fashioned man, used to tell me that my bath in Clear Brook had been a fortunate thing after all, for I would never be the nervous, delicate child I had been before.

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## JULIA WARREN.

### A SEQUEL TO PALACES AND PRISONS.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

#### CHAPTER I.

He was a man of simple heart,  
Patient and meek, the Christian part,  
Came to his soul as came the air  
That heaved his bosom; hope, despair,  
Were chastened by a holy faith!—  
Meek in his life he feared not death.

PERHAPS in the whole world there is not a building in which all the horror, the wild poetry, of sin and grief is so forcibly written out in black shadows and hard stone as in the city prison of New York. A stranger passing that massive pile would unconsciously feel saddened, though entirely ignorant of its painful uses, for the very atmosphere fills him with a vague sensation of alarm. The Egyptian architecture so heavy and imposing—the thick walls which no sunshine can penetrate, and against which cries of anguish might, unheard, exhaust themselves forever—the ponderous columns lost in a perspective of black shadows in the front entrance—the lines of granite sweeping toward Broadway, and interlocking with the black prison that rises up, like a solid wall, gloomy, windowless, and penetrated only with loop-holes, like a fort which has nothing but misery to protect—all this fills the heart with gloom. The moment you come in sight of the building your breath draws heavily; the atmosphere seems humid with tears, oppressive with sighs, a storm of human suffering appears gathering around. The air seems eddying with curses which have exhausted their sound against those walls, you feel as if sin, shame and grief were palpable spirits walking behind and around you, and all this is the more terrible because the waves of life gather close up to the prison, swelling against its walls on every side. It sits like a monster crouching in the very heart of a great city—the veins and arteries of social evil weave and coil close around it, like serpents born in the same foul atmosphere with itself. The prison, lower than the graded walks, nestled in a dried up swamp that has exchanged the miasma of decayed nature for the miasma of human guilt; the neighborhood close at hand sunk, like this building, deep in the grade of human existence: is there on earth another spot so eloquent of suffering, so populous with sin?

"The Tombs," this name was given to the prison years ago, when its foundations were first sunk in the swampy moisture of the soil—where you could see the vast structure sinking, day by day, into its murky foundations, and enveloped in clouds of palpable miasma. There the poor wretches huddled within its walls, died like herds of poisoned cattle; pine coffins were constantly passing in and out of those ponderous doors. Pauper death-carts might be seen every day lumbering up Centre street, on their road to Potters' Field. The man, innocent or guilty, who entered those walls breathed his death warrant as he passed in. This only continued for a season, it was not long before the tramp of human feet, and the weight of that ponderous mass of stone crushed the poisonous moisture from the earth, but the name which death had left still remained—a name deeply and solemnly significant of the place to all who deem moral evil and moral death as mournful as the physical suffering which had baptized it.

The main building, which fronts on Centre street, opens to a dusky and pillared vestibule, which leads to various offices and rooms occupied by the courts and officials connected with the prison. At the right, as you enter, is the police court, a spacious apartment, with deep casements, a raised platform or dias, railed in from the people, upon which the magistrates sit; a desk or two, and beyond, several smaller rooms used for private examination when they are deemed necessary.

In one of these rooms, the smallest and most remote, sat a mournful group, early one morning, before the magistrates had taken their seats upon the bench. One was an old man, thin, haggard and care-worn, but with a placid and even exalted cast of countenance, such as a stricken man wears when he has learned "to suffer and be strong." He sat near a round table covered with worn baize, upon which one elbow rested rather heavily, for he had tasted little food for several days; and the languor of habitual privation, joined to strong nervous re-action after a scene of horror, impressed his person even more than his face. That, as I have said, was pale and worn, but tranquil and



composed to a degree that startled those who looked upon him, for the old man was waiting there to be examined on a charge of murder, and men shuddered when they saw the calmness upon his features. It seemed to them nothing but hardened indifference, the composure of guilt that had ceased to feel its own enormity.

Close by this man sat two females, an old woman and a girl, but not weeping, they had no tears left, but they sat with heavy, mournful eyes gazing upon the floor. Marks of terrible suffering were visible in their faces, and in the dull, hopeless apathy of their motionless silence. Now and then a low sigh rose and died upon the pale lips of the girl, but it was faint as that which exhales from a flower which has been trodden to death, and the poor girl was only conscious that the pain at her heart was a little sharper that instant than it had been.

The woman, pale, still and grief-stricken in every feature and limb, did not even sigh. It seemed as if the breath must have frozen upon her cold lips, she seemed so utterly chilled, body and soul.

An officer of the police stood just within the room, not one of those burly, white coated characters we find always in English novels, but a tall, slender and gentlemanly person, who regarded the group it had been his duty to arrest with a grave and compassionate glance. True, he searched the old man's face with that glance with which those who have studied the human lineaments strive to read the secrets of a soul in their expression—but there was nothing rude either in his look or in his manner.

After awhile the officer remembered that his prisoners had not tasted food since the day previous, and, with a pang of self-reproach, he addressed them,

"You are worn out for want of food: I should have thought of this!" he said, approaching the table; "I will order some coffee."

The old man raised his head, and turned his grateful eyes upon the officer.

"Yes," he said, with a gentle smile, "they are hungry: a little coffee will do them good."

The young female looked up and softly moved her head; but the other continued motionless, she had heard nothing.

The officer whispered to a person outside the door, and then began to pace up and down the room like a sentinel, but treading very lightly, as if subdued by the silent grief over which he kept guard.

Directly the coffee was brought in, with bread and fragments of cold meat.

"Come, now," said the officer, cheerfully—"take something to give you strength. The

examination may be a long one, and I have seen powerful men sink under a first examination—take something to keep you up, or you will get nervous, and admit more than a wise man should."

"Yes," said the old man, meekly, "you are right, they will want strength—so shall I." He took one of the tin-cups which had been brought half full of coffee, and reached it toward the woman.

"Wife!" he said, bending toward her.

The poor woman started, and looked at him through her wild, heavy eyes.

"What do you wish, Wilcox? What is it you want of me?"

"You observe she is almost beside herself," said the old man, addressing the officer, and now his face grew troubled—"what can I do?"

"Oh! these things are very common. She must be roused!" answered the man, kindly. "Speak to her again."

The old man stooped over his wife, and laid his hand gently upon hers. She did not move. He grasped her thin fingers, and tears stood in his eyes, still she did not move. He stood a moment gazing in her face, the tears running down his cheeks. He hesitated, looked at the officer half timidly, and bending down kissed the old woman on the forehead.

That kiss broke up the ice in her heart. She stood up and began to weep.

"You spoke to me, Wilcox—what was it you wanted? I am better now—indeed quite well. What is it you wanted me to do?"

"He only wishes you to eat and drink something," said the officer, deeply moved.

"Eat and drink—have we got anything to eat and drink? That is always his way when we are short, urging us and hungry himself."

"But there is enough for all," said the old man. "See, I too will eat, and Julia!"

"Why, if there is enough we will all eat, why not," said the poor woman, with a dim smile.

She took the coffee, tasted it, and looked around the room with vague curiosity.

"What is all this?—where are we now, Wilcox?" she said, in a low, frightened voice.

The old man kept his eyes bent to hers, they were full of trouble, and this stimulated her to question him again.

"Where are we? I remember walking, wading, it seemed to me, neck deep, through a crowd, trying to keep up with you. Some one said they were taking us to prison; that I had done nothing, and they would not keep me. That you and Julia would stay, but I must go into the street, because a wife could not bear witness against her husband, but a grandchild could. Have I been crazy, or walking in my sleep?"

"No, my wife, you are only worn out, frightened; drink some more of the coffee, by and bye all will be clear to you."

The old woman obeyed him, and drank eagerly from the cup in her hand. Then she looked on her husband, on Julia, and the officer, as if striving to make out why they were all together in that strange place. All at once she set down the cup and drew a heavy breath.

"I remember," she said, mournfully—"I remember now that tall, dead man, with his open eyes and white clenched teeth; I know who he was—I knew it at first."

The officer drew a step nearer and listened, the spirit of his vocation was strong within him. There might be important evidence in her words, and for a moment the humane man was lost in the acute officer. The prisoner remarked this movement, and looked on the man with an expression of mild rebuke.

"Would you take advantage of her unsettled state, or of the words it might wring from me?" he said.

"No," answered the officer, stepping back, abashed. "No, I would not do anything of the kind, at least deliberately."

But this remonstrance had aroused distrust in the old woman, she drew close to her husband, and whispered to him—

"I cannot quite make it out, Wilcox. The people—the crowd said over and over again that they were taking us to prison. This is no prison! carpets on the floor, chairs, window blinds, all so pretty and snug, with us eating and drinking together. This is no prison, Wilcox, we have not had so nice a home these ten years."

"This is only a room in the prison, not the one they will give me by and bye!" answered the old man, with a faint smile, "that will be smaller yet."

"You say *me*!" said the wife, holding tight to the hand that clasped hers. "Why do you not say that the room—let it be what it will—is large enough for us both, husband? I say, you did not mean that it will not hold your wife too."

The old man turned away from those earnest eyes, he could not bear the look of mingled terror and entreaty that filled them.

"Remember, Wilcox, we have not spent one night apart in thirty years!"

"I know it," answered the old man, with quivering lips.

"And now you will let me stay with you?"

"Ask him," said the old man, turning his face away—"ask him!"

She let go her hold of the prisoner's hand with great reluctance, and went up to the officer.

"You heard what he said, you must know

what I want. We have lived together a great many years, more than your whole life. We have had trouble—great trouble, but always together. Tell me—can we stay together yet?"

"I do not know," said the man, deeply moved. "Your husband is charged with a crime that requires strict prison rules."

"I know, he is charged with murder! but you see how innocent he is," answered the wife, and all the holy faith, the pure, beautiful love born in her youth and strengthened in her age, kindled over those wrinkled features—"you see how innocent he is!"

The man checked a slight wave of the head, for he could not appear to doubt that old man's innocence, strong as the evidence was against him.

"You will not send me away!" said the old woman, still regarding him with great anxiety.

"I have no power—it is not for me to decide—such things have been done. In minor offences, I have known wives to remain in prison, but never in capital cases that I remember."

"But some one has the power. It is only for a little while—it cannot be for more than a week or two that they will keep him, you know."

"It may be—from my heart I hope so—but I can answer for nothing, I have no power."

"Who has power?—what can we do?"

It was the young girl who spoke now. The entreaties of her grandmother—the tremulous voice of her grandsire, at length aroused her feelings from the icy stillness that had crept over them. The mist cleared away from her eyes, and though heavy with sleeplessness and grief, they began to kindle with aroused animation.

"No one at present, my poor girl—nothing can be done till after the examination."

Julia had drawn close to her grandmother, and grasped a wave of her faded dress with one hand. The officer could not turn his eyes from her face, so sad, so mournfully beautiful. He was about to utter some vague words of comfort, but while they were on his lips a door from the police-court opened, and a man looked through, saying in a careless, off-hand manner, "bring the old man in."

The court-room was crowded, with witnesses ready to be examined, lawyers, eager for employment, and others actuated by curiosity alone, all crowded and jostled together outside the bar. As the prisoner entered, the throng grew denser, pouring in through the open door, and spreading out into the vestibule to the granite pillars, all pressing forward with strained eyes to obtain a view of one feeble old man.

They made a line for him to pass, crushing against each other with their heads bent back,

and staring in the old man's face as if he had been some wild animal, till his thin hand clutched the bar. There he stood meek as a child, with all those bright, staring eyes bent upon him. A faint crimson flush broke through the wrinkles on his forehead; and his hand stirred upon the railing with a slight shiver, otherwise his gentle composure was unbroken.

The crowd closed up as he passed, but the two females clinging together, breathless and wild with fear, lest they should be separated from him, pressed close upon his steps, forcing their way impetuously one moment, and looking helplessly around the next. Still resolutely following the prisoner, they won some little space at each step, not once losing sight of his grey head as it moved through the sea of faces, all turned, as they thought, menacingly upon him. At length they stood close behind the old man, and, unseen by the crowd, clung to his garments with their thin, pale hands.

The judge bent forward in his leathern easy-chair, and looked in the prisoner's face, not harshly, not even with sternness. Had a lighter offence been charged upon the old man, his face might have borne either of these expressions, but the very magnitude of the charge under investigation gave dignity to the judge, and true dignity is always gentle.

He stooped forward, therefore, not smiling, but kindly in look and voice, informed the prisoner of his rights, and cautioned him not to criminate himself ignorantly in any answer he might make to interrogations from the court.

The old man raised his eyes, thanked the judge in a low voice, and waited.

"Your name."

"I am known in the city as James Warren, but it is not my real name."

"What is the real name then?"

"I will not answer."

The old man spoke mildly, but with great firmness. The judge bent his head. A dozen pens could be heard at the reporters' desk taking down the answer. A hush was on the crowd, every man leaned forward, breathless and listening. Those even in the vestibule kept still while the old man's reply ran among them in whispers.

"Did you know the man who was found dead in your house on the nineteenth of this month?"

"Yes, I knew the man well!"

"Where and when had you met before?"

"I will not answer!"

"Did you see him on the evening of the eighteenth?"

"No!"

"Did evil feeling exist between you?"

The old man turned a shade paler, and his hand shook upon the railing, he hesitated as if

at a loss for words which might convey an exact answer.

"I cannot say what his feelings were—but of my own I can speak, having asked this same question to my soul many times. Edward Leicester had wronged me and mine—but I forgave the wrong, I had no evil feeling against him."

"Was there not high words and angry defiance between you that morning?"

"He was angry, I was not; agitated, alarmed I was, but not angry."

"Were you alone with him?"

"Yes!"

"How long?"

"Perhaps ten minutes!"

"Once more," said the judge—"once more let me remind you that in another court these answers may be used to your prejudice. Now take time, you have no counsel, so take time for reflection before you reply. What business had Edward Leicester with you?—what was the subject of conversation between you?"

The old man bent his forehead to the railing, and thus stood motionless without answering. His own honest sense told him that every question that he refused to answer gave rise to doubt, and kindled some new prejudice against him. His obvious course was silence, or a frank statement of the truth. He raised his head, and addressed the judge gently as he might have consulted with a friend.

"If I have a right to refuse answers to a portion of what you ask me, may I not, by the same right, remain entirely silent?"

"There is no law which forces you to answer where a reply will prejudice your cause."

"Will anything I can say help my cause?"

"No!"

"Then I will be silent."

The judge felt this to be a wise conclusion, and a faint gleam of satisfaction came to his lips. The meek dignity of that old man, the beautiful pale face now and then peering out from behind his poverty-stricken garments—the feeble old woman crowding close to his side, all had aroused his sympathy. It was impossible to look on that group and believe any one of those feeble creatures guilty of the blood that had reddened their poverty-stricken hearth, and yet the evidence against that placid old man had been fearfully strong before the coroner's inquest.

Some commotion arose in the crowd after this. Men began to whisper opinions to each other—now and then a rude joke or laugh rose from the vestibule. People began to circulate in and out at the various doors, and during all this several witnesses were examined. These persons had seen a gentleman, well, nay, elegantly dressed, enter the miserable basement occupied by the

prisoner and his family, very early on the morning of the nineteenth. One, a person who lived in the front basement, testified to high words, and a sound as if some one had stamped several times on the floor. Then he heard quick footsteps along the entry; saw the stranger an instant in the front area, and then heard him go back again. This excited considerable curiosity in the witness, who opened the door of his own room and looked out. He caught a glimpse of the stranger going, quickly, through the next door, and saw two females. The old woman and girl now standing behind the prisoner were crouching in the back end of the entry, apparently much frightened, for both were pale: and the old woman wrung her hands while the girl wept bitterly. A little after, perhaps two minutes, this man heard a sound from the next room, as if of some heavy body falling, this was followed by a hush that made him shiver from head to foot. He went out and saw the two females clinging together, and creeping pale and terror-stricken up to the door, which the old woman tried to open, but could not, her hands shook so violently. The witness himself turned the latch and looked in, leaning over the females, who, uttering a low cry, stood motionless, blocking up the entrance. He saw a man, the stranger, lying upon the floor, stretched back in the agony of a fierce death pang; his teeth were clenched; his eyes wide open; the chin protruded upward; and both hands were groping and clutching at the bare floor. While the witness looked on, the limbs, half gathered up and strained against the floor, gave way, and settled down like ridges of withered grass. The room was badly lighted, but it seemed to the witness that there was some faint motion, after this a shudder, or it might be a fold of the dead man's clothes settling around him, but except this all signs of life went out from the body.

Then the witness had time to see the other objects in the room. The first thing that his eyes fell upon was the face of old Mr. Warren, the palest, the most deathly face he ever saw on a living man; he was stooping over the corpse, grasping what seemed a handful of snow, stained through and through with blood which he pressed down upon the dead man's side.

The witness grew wild with the terror of this scene. He pushed the two females forward and went in. The prisoner looked up, still pressing his hand upon the dead man; his lips moved, and he tried to speak, but could not. On stooping down, the witness saw that the stained mass clenched in the old man's fingers was one side of a white satin vest, clutched up with masses of fine linen, which the dead man had worn. He also saw a knife lying upon the floor wet to the

haft. After a minute or so, the prisoner spoke, apparently feeling the body grow stiff under his hand; he turned his head with a piteous look, and whispered—"what can we do?"

The witness stated that his answer was "nothing—the man is dead!"

Then the old man got up, and went to a bed huddled on the floor in one corner of the room, where his wife and granddaughter had dropped, when the witness pushed them with unconscious violence from the threshold. He said something in a low voice to the woman, and she answered—

"Oh, Wilcox, tell me that you did not do it!"

The prisoner looked at her—at first he seemed amazed as if some horrid thought had just struck him, then he looked grieved, wounded to the heart. The expression that came upon his face was enough to make one cry, but his voice, when he spoke, was even worse than the look: it seemed choked up with tears, that he could not shed.

"My wife:" he said nothing more, but that was enough to make the old woman cover her face with both hands and sob like a child. Julia, his grandchild, who had been sitting white and still as death till then, lifted her eyes to the old man's face, and you could see them deepen with sorrowful astonishment, as if she too had been suddenly wounded. The look of horror died on her features, leaving them full of pitying tenderness. She arose with the look of an angel, and clasping her hands over the old man's arm, as he stood gazing mournfully upon his wife, pressed her pale, beautiful head against his side.

"Grandfather, she did not think it. It was the terror that spoke, not her, not my grandmother!" The old man would have laid his hand upon her head, but it was crimson and wet. He saw this, and dropped it again.

The dim light, the pale faces, the man stark and dead upon the floor, made the scene too painful even for a strong man. The witness went out, and aroused the neighborhood. He did not go back: more courageous men would have shrunk from the scene as he did.

I have given this man's evidence, not in his own words. He was a German, and spoke rude English; but the scene, he described, was only the more graphic for that. It impressed the judges and the crowd; it gratified that intense love of the horrible that is becoming a passion in the masses, and yet softened it with touches of rude pathos, that also gratified the populace. Here and there you saw a wet eye in the crowd. Men who were strangers to each other exchanged whispered wishes that the prisoner might be found innocent. The old woman and her granddaughter became objects of unceasing curiosity. Men pressed forward to get a sight at them. The reporters paused to study their features,

and to take an inventory of their poverty-stricken garments.

Other witnesses were called, all testifying to like facts, all serving to fasten the appearances of guilt more closely upon that fallen old man. When all had been examined but the granddaughter, the excitement became intense; the crowd pressed closer to the bar; those in the vestibule rushed in, filling every corner of the room. The poor girl moved when her name was pronounced, and with difficulty mounted the step which lifted her white face to a level with the judge. The little hands grasped the railing till every drop of blood was driven from the strained fingers; but for this, she must have fallen to the earth, for there was no strength in her limbs, no strength at her heart, save that which one fixed solemn thought gave. There was something deeper than the pallor of fear in those beautiful features—something more sublime than sorrow in the deep violet eyes which she lifted to the magistrate. He saw her lips move, and bent forward to catch the sound of words that she seemed to be uttering,—

"I cannot answer any questions—don't ask me, sir, don't!" He caught these words. He saw the look of meek courage that spoke even more forcibly than the tremulous lips. No one saw the look, or heard the voice, but himself, not even the prisoner; for age had somewhat dulled his ear. The face, the look, the gentle bearing of this poor girl, filled the judge with compassion. It is a horrible thing for any law to force evidence from one loving heart that may cast another into the grave. The magistrate had never felt the cruelty so much before. The questions that he should have propounded sunk back upon his heart. It seemed like torturing a lamb with all the flock looking on. Still, the magistrates of our courts learn hard lessons even of juvenile depravity: not to be suspicious would, in them, be a living miracle. This girl might be prompted by advice, and thus artfully acting as the tool of some lawyer. You would not look in her eyes and believe it, but soft eyes sometimes hood over falsehood that would make you tremble. No one is better aware of this than the acute magistrate, still there is something in pure simplicity that convinces the heart long before the judgment has power to act.

"Who told you not to answer my questions?" he said, in a low voice.

"No one!"

"Then why refuse?"

"Because my grandfather never killed the man, but what I should say might make it seem as if he did."

"But do you know that is contempt of court, a punishable offence?"

"I did not know it!"

"That I have power to make you answer?"

A faint beautiful smile flitted across that pure face. You might fancy a youthful martyr smiling thus when threatened with death by fire. It disturbed in no degree the humility of her demeanor, but that one gleam of the strength within her satisfied the magistrate.

Not even the reporters had been able to catch a word of the conversation. His dignity was in no way committed. He resolved to waive the cruel power, which would have wrung accusation from that helpless creature unnecessarily; for the evidence that had gone before was quite sufficient to justify a commitment.

"We shall not require the evidence of this young girl," he said, addressing a fellow-magistrate, who had been writing quietly during the proceedings.

"No," answered the magistrate, without checking his pen or raising his head, "what is the use? The story of that German was enough. I should have committed him after that. The poor girl is frightened to death. Let her go!"

"But in the other court, there she will be wanted!"

"True, she must be kept safe. Anybody forthcoming with the bonds?"

"I fear not. It seems hard to keep the poor thing in prison!"

"Like caging a blackbird!" answered the man, racing over the paper with his gold-mounted pen. "Hard, but necessary: bad laws must be kept the same as good ones, my dear fellow! Disgrace to civilization and all that, but the majesty of the law must be maintained, even though it does shut up nice little girls with the offscouring of the earth."

"It goes against my heart!" answered the sitting magistrate with a sigh. "It seems like casting a new fallen wreath before a herd of wild animals. I never hated to sign my name so much!"

"Must be done though. You have stretched a point to save her. Just now, the reporters were eyeing you. Another step of leniency and down comes the press!"

"I shall act rightly, according to my own judgment, notwithstanding the press."

"A beautiful sentiment, only don't let those chaps hear it. Would not appreciate the thing at all!"

The sitting magistrate spoke the truth. Never in his life had he signed papers of commitment so reluctantly; but they were made out at length, and handed to the officer. The old man was conducted from the bar one way, and a strange officer took Julia by the hand forcing her through the crowd in another direction. At first, she



supposed that they were going with her grandfather. When they were separated in the crowd, she began to struggle; a faint wail broke from her lips, and the officer was compelled to cast his arm around her waist, thus half carrying her through the crowd.

The woman had followed her husband and grandchild mechanically, but when they were separated, the cry that broke from Julia's lips made her turn and rush back: the crowd closed in around her: she cast one wild look after the prisoner, another toward the spot whence the

wail came. They both were lost through a door in the dark vistas of the prison. She saw a white arm flung wildly up as if beckoning her, and rushed forward, blindly struggling against the crowd. In the press of the people, she was hurried forth into the vestibule, and there leaning, in dreary helplessness, against one of the massy stone pillars, she stood looking vaguely around for her husband and child. It was a heart-rending sight, but every day those ponderous walls witness scenes equally mournful.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## JULIA WARREN.

### A SEQUEL TO PALACES AND PRISONS.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 152.

#### CHAPTER II.

It is strange—nay, it is horrible—that so much of barbarism still lingers in the laws and customs of a free land. Without crime or offence of any kind, a person may be taken, here in the city of New York, and confined for months among the most hideous malefactors; their self-respect broken down; their associations brutalized, and all this, that the law may be fulfilled. What must that law be which requires oppression, that it may render justice? In New York, the poor witness—a man who has the misfortune to know anything of a crime before the courts, is himself exactly in the place of a criminal. Like the malefactor, he must give bonds for his prompt appearance on the day of trial, or lacking the influence to obtain these, must himself share the prison of the very felon his evidence will condemn. Strangers thus—sea-faring men, and persons destitute of friends—are often imprisoned for months among the very dregs of humanity: innocent, and yet suffering the severest penalties of guilt. This injustice, so glaring that a savage would blush to acknowledge it, exists almost unnoticed in a city overrun with benevolent societies, crowded with churches, and inundated with sympathies for the wronged of every nation or city on earth but our own. If ostentatious charity would, for a time, give way to simple justice, New York, like all the American cities, we know of, would obtain for itself more respect abroad and more real prosperity at home.

It was under this law, that Julia Warren, a young creature, just bursting into the first bloom of girlhood, pure, sensitive and guileless as humanity can be, was dragged like a thief into the city prison. She had known the deepest degradation of poverty, and that is always so closely crowded against crime in cities, that it seems almost impossible to keep the dew upon an innocent nature. But Julia had been guarded in her poverty by principle so firm, by love so holy, that neither the close neighborhood of sin nor the gripe of absolute want had power to stain the sweet bloom of a nature that seemed to fling off

evil impressions as the swan casts off waterdrops from its snowy bosom, though its whole form is bathed in them.

This young creature, in all her gentle innocence, without crime, without even the suspicion of a fault, was now the inmate of a prison, the associate of felons, hand in hand with guilt of a kind and degree that had never entered even her imagination.

At first, when the officer separated the poor girl from her grandparents, she struggled wildly, shrieked for help, and at last fell to imploring the man with eyes so wild, and eloquence so startling, that he paused in one of the dark corridors leading from the court, and strove to soothe her, supposing that she was terrified by the gloom of the place.

"No, no!" she answered. "It is not that! I did not see that it was dark. I did not look at anything. My grandfather—poor grandma. Let me go with them. I'm not afraid. I don't care for being in prison, only let me stay where they are!"

"Your grandmother is not here!"

"Not here, not here!" answered the poor creature, wildly and aghast. "Then what has become of her? Let me go—let me go, I say. She will die!"

Julia unlocked the hands that she had clasped, flung back the hair from her face, and fled down the corridor so swiftly that the keeper, taken by surprise, was left far behind: an officer, coming in from the court, seized her by the arm as she was passing him.

"Not so fast, canary bird: not quite so fast. It takes swifter wings than yours to get out of this cage."

Julia looked at the man breathless with affright.

"What do you hold me for? Why can't I go?" she gasped forth.

"Because you are a prisoner, little one!"

"But I have done nothing!"

"Nobody ever does anything that comes here," said this man, with a contemptuous smile. "Never was so many innocent people crowded together."

As he spoke, the man tightened his hold on her arm, and moved forward, forcing her along with him.

The poor creature winced under the pain of his grasp.

"You hurt my arm," she said, in a low voice.

"Do I?" replied the man, affected by the despondency of her tone. "I did not mean to do that; but it would be difficult to touch a little, delicate thing like you without leaving a mark. Come, don't cry. I did not hurt you on purpose."

"I know it. It is not that," answered the child, lifting her eyes, from which the big tears were dropping like rain.

"Well, well, go quietly to the woman's department. They will not keep you long unless you have been stealing, or some thing of that sort!"

"Stealing," faltered the girl, "stealing!" The color flashed into her pale, wet cheeks, a faint, scornful smile quivered over her lips.

The officer, from whom she had fled, now came up. "Come," he said, with a shade of importance. "I cannot be kept waiting in this way."

"I am ready!" answered the poor girl, in a voice of utter despondency, while her head dropped upon her bosom. "If I am a prisoner, take me away. But what—what have I done?"

"Never mind; settle that with the court. I am in a hurry, so come along!"

Julia neither expostulated nor attempted to resist.

She gave her hand to the officer, who led her quickly forward. They threaded the dim vault-like passage, and paused before a grated door, through which the trembling girl could see dark squalid figures moving about in the dusky twilight that filled the prison. Two or three faces, haggard and fiend-like, were pressed up against the bars—one was that of a negro woman, scarred with many a street brawl, whose inflamed eyes glared wickedly upon the innocent creature, whom the laws had sent to be her companion.

"Get back—back, with you!" commanded the officer, dashing his keys against the grating. "Your hideous faces frighten the poor thing!"

The faces flitted away, grinning defiance and sending back a burst of hoarse laughter, that made Julia shiver from head to foot. She drew close to the man, clinging to his garments, while he turned the heavy lock and thrust the door half open. The dim vista of a hall, with cells yawning on one side, and filled with gloomy light, through which wild, impish figures wandered restlessly to and fro, or sat motionless against the walls, met Julia's gaze. She shrank back, and clinging desperately to her conductor.

"Oh, mercy, mercy! Not here—not here!" she cried, pallid and shivering.

The man raised her firmly in his arms, and

passing through the door, set her down. She heard the clank of keys; the shooting of a heavy bolt. She saw the shadow of this, her last friend, fall across the grating; and then, in dreary desolation, she sat down upon a wooden bench, and leaning her cold cheek against the wall, closed her eyes. The tears pressed through those long dark eyelashes, and rolled one by one in heavy drops over her face. The arms hung helplessly down: all the energies of her young life seemed utterly prostrated.

The hall was full of women of all ages, and bearing every stamp that vice or sorrow impresses on the countenance. Some, old and hardened in evil, stood aloof looking upon the heart-stricken girl with their stony, pitiless eyes; others, younger, more reckless and fierce in their sympathies, gathered around in a crowd, commenting upon her grief, some mockingly, others with a touch of feeling. Black and white, all huddled around the bench she occupied, pouring their hot breath out, till she sickened and grew faint, as if the boughs of a Upas tree were drooping over her.

"She's sick—she's fainting away!" cried one of the women. "Bring some water!"

"No," cried another. "If we had a drop of brandy now. But water, bah!"

"It's the horrors—see how she trembles," exclaimed a third, with a chuckle and a toss of the head.

"No such thing. She's too young—too handsome!"

"Oh, get away! Don't I know the symptoms," interrupted the first speaker, with a coarse laugh. "Ain't I young—ain't I handsome: who says no to that? And yet haven't you heard me yell—haven't you heard me rave with the horrors?"

"That was because the doctor prescribes brandy," interposed a sly-looking mulatto woman, folding her arms and turning her head saucily on one side. "When that medicine comes, you are still enough."

This retort was followed by a general laugh, in which the object joined, till the tears rolled down her cheeks.

In the midst of this coarse glee, Julia had fallen, like a withered flower, upon the bench. That moment, the huge negress that had so terrified the poor creature at the grating, plunged out from a cell in the upper end of the hall, and came toward the group with a tin cup full of water in her hand. Had a friend come forth on an errand of mercy, it would not have seemed more out of place than that hideous creature under the influence of a kind impulse. She came down the hall as rapidly as her naked feet, hampered by an old pair of slipshod shoes, could move. The dress hung in rents and fes-

toons of dirty and faded calico around her gaunt limbs, trailing the stone floor on one side and lifted high above her clumsy ankles on the other. The women scattered as she approached, giving her a full view of the fainting girl.

"So you've done it among you: smothered her. How dare you? Didn't you see that I took a fancy to her, before she came in. Let her alone. I want a pet, and she's mine."

"Yours. Why it was your face that frightened her to death. There hasn't been a bit of color in her lips since she saw you," answered the woman that had so eagerly recommended brandy, and who kept her place in spite of the formidable negress. "Here, give me the water and get out of my sight."

The negress pushed this woman roughly aside, and kneeling down by the senseless girl, bathed her forehead with the water. Julia did not stir: her face continued deathly white, a faint violet tinge lay upon her lips and around her eyes; her little hands fell down to the stone floor; her feet dropped heavily from the bench. This position, more than the still face even, was fearfully like death.

"Call a keeper," cried half a dozen voices. "She is scared to death!"

"The doctor!" urged as many more voices. "It will take a doctor to bring her out of that fit!"

"We won't have a doctor," exclaimed the old negress, stoutly. "He'd call it tremors, and give her brandy or laudanum. I tell you, she isn't one of that sort! Don't believe a drop of the ardent ever touched her lips!"

Again a coarse laugh broke up from among the prisoners.

The negress dashed a handful of water across the poor face over which that laughter floated like the orgies of fiends around the death couch. She rose to one knee, and turned her fierce eyes upon the scoffers.

I have never stained a page in my life with profane language, even when describing a profane person—never have placed the name of God irreverently into the lips of an ideal character: sooner would I feel an oath burning upon my own soul, than register one where it might familiarize itself to a thousand souls, surprised into its use by their confidence in the author. Even here, where profanity is the common language of the place, I will risk a feebler description in my own language rather than for one instant break through the rule of a life; yet the language which I could not force this pen to write, the coarse creatures, most of them, brutalized by vice to a degree that I shrink from describing, were the influences, into which a young guileless creature was plunged by the laws of an enlightened

people. When she opened her eyes, that scarred, black face, less repulsive from a touch of kindly feeling, but hideous still, was the first object that greeted them.

The woman, as I have said, had risen to one knee. The holy name of God trembled on her coarse lips, prefacing the torrent of abusive expostulation that broke from them in the rudest and most repulsive language.

"You needn't laugh. Don't I know better—fifty times better than any of you? Haven't I been here, this is the fifteenth time? Don't I go to my country-seat on Blackwell's Island every summer of my life? How many times have you been there, the best of you, I should like to ask? Twice three times. Boh! what should you know of life. Stand out of the way. She's beginning to sob. You shan't stifle her again, I promise you. It was the water did it. Which of you could be got out of a fit with water—tell me that? Here—just come one of you and feel her breath, while the tears are in it—sweet as a rose, moist as dew. I tell you, she never tasted anything stronger than bread and milk in her life!"

The woman clenched this truth with an imprecation on herself, which made the young girl start up and look wildly around, as if she believed herself encompassed by a band of demons.

"What is the matter? Are you afraid?" said the white prisoner, that had formerly spoken, bending over her.

"Get out of the way," said the negress, with another oath. "It's my pet, I tell you."

The terrible creature, whose very kindness was brutal, reached forth her arm and attempted to draw Julia to her side, but the poor girl recoiled, shuddering from the touch, and fell upon her knees, covering her ears with both hands."

"Are you afraid of me? Is that it?" shouted the negress, almost touching the strained fingers with her mouth.

"Yes, yes!" broke from her tremulous lips, and Julia kept her eyes upon the woman in a wild stare. "I am afraid."

"This is gratitude," said the woman, fiercely. "I brought her to, and she looks at me as if I were a mad-dog."

Julia cowered under the fiery glance with which these words were accompanied. This but exasperated her hideous friend, and with an angry grip of the teeth, she seized one little hand, forcing it away from the ear, that was on the instant filled with a fresh torrent of curses.

"Oh, don't! Pray, pray. It is dreadful to swear so!"

"Swear! Why, I didn't swear—not a word of it. Have been talking milk and water all the time just for your sake. Leave it to all these ladies, if I haven't!" said the woman, evidently

impressed with the truth of her assertion, and appealing, with an air of simple confidence, to her fellow-prisoners, for profanity had become with her a fixed habit, and she was really unconscious of it.

A laugh of derision answered this singular appeal, and a dozen voices gave mocking assurance that there had been a mistake about the matter, saying,

"Oh! no, old Mag never swore in her life."

Tortured by the wild tumult, and driven to the very confines of insanity, Julia could scarcely forbear screaming for help. She started up, avoiding the negress with a desperate spring sideways, and staggered toward the grated door. It seemed to her impossible to draw a deep breath, in the midst of those wretched beings!

"Mamma, mamma!" said a soft, sweet voice, from one of the cells, and as Julia turned her face, she saw through the narrow iron door-way the head of a child, bending eagerly forward and radiant with joyous surprise.

Julia paused, held forth both her trembling hands, and entered the cell, smiling through her tears as if an angel had called.

The child arose from the floor, for it had been upon its hands and knees, and put back its golden hair, that broke into waves and curls in spite of neglect. With two soiled and dimpled hands, it gazed upon the intruder in speechless disappointment. Julia saw this, and her heart sank again.

"It was not me, you wanted," she said, laying her hand tremblingly on the child's shoulder. "You are sorry that I came?"

"Yes," answered the child, and her soft, brown eyes filled with tears. "I thought it was mamma. It was dark, and I could not see, but it seemed as if you were mamma."

Julia stooped down and kissed the child. In that dim light, it was difficult to say which of those beautiful faces seemed the most angelic.

"But I love you. I am glad to see you," she said, in a voice that made the little boy smile through his tears. He fixed his eyes upon her in a long, earnest gaze, and then nestling close to her side, murmured, "and I love you!"

There was a narrow bed in the cell, and Julia sat down upon it, lifting the child to her knee. In return, she felt a little arm steal around her neck and a warm cheek laid against her own. The innocent nature of the child blended with that of the maiden, as blossoms in a strange atmosphere may be supposed to lean toward each other.

"Do they shut up children in this wicked place? How came you here, darling?"

"I don't know!" answered the child, shaking its beautiful head.

"But did you come alone?"

"Oh, no! *She* came with me."

"Who—your mamma?" questioned Julia, so deeply interested in the child, that for the moment her own grief was forgotten.

"No, not her. They call her my mamma, but she isn't. Come here, softly, and I will let you see."

He drew Julia to the entrance, and pointed with his finger toward a female, who sat cowering by a stove a little distance up the passage. There was something so picturesque in the bold, Roman outlines of this woman's face that it riveted Julia's attention. The large head, covered with masses of dull, black hair, gathered up in a loose coil behind, and falling down the cheeks in disheveled waves; the nose, rising in a haughty and not ungraceful curve; the massive forehead and heavy chin, with a large mouth coral red and full of sensual expression. All this gave to that head, bending downward with its side-face toward the light, the interest and effect of some old picture, which, without real beauty, haunts the memory like an unforgotten sin.

This woman had evidently received some injury on the forehead, for a scarlet silk handkerchief was knotted across it, the ends mingling behind with the neglected braids of her hair, which, but for it, must have fallen in coils over her neck and shoulders.

Her dress, of soft, blue barage, had once been elegant, if not rich, but in that place, faded and soiled, with the flounces half torn away and the rents gathered rudely up with pins that she had found upon the stone floor of her prison, it had a look of peculiar desolation, every fold bespoke that flash poverty which prodigality makes hideous.

A book with yellow covers, soiled and torn, lay open upon this woman's lap, and with her large, full arms loosely folded on her bosom, she bent over it with a look of gloating interest, that betrayed all the intensity of her evil nature. You could see her black eyes kindle beneath their inky lashes, as she impatiently dashed over a leaf, or was molested in any way by the noise around. You could not look upon this woman for an instant without feeling the influence which a strong character, even in repose, fixes upon the mind. Powerful intellect and strong passions—the one utterly untrained, the other curbless and fierce—broke through every curve of her sensual person, and every line of her face.

As Julia stood in the cell-door, with one arm around the child, this woman chanced to look up, and caught those beautiful eyes fixed so steadily upon her. She returned the glance with a hard, impudent stare, which filled the young creature with alarm, while it served to fascinate her gaze.



The woman seemed enraged that her glance had not made the stranger cower at once. Crushing her book in one hand, she arose and came forward, sweeping her way through the prisoners with that sort of undulating swagger into which vice changes what was originally grace. She came up to Julia, with an oath upon her lips, demanding why she had been staring at her so?

Julia did not answer, but shrank close to the child, who cringed against her, evidently terrified by the menacing attitude and fierce looks that his temerity had provoked.

"Come here, you little wretch," exclaimed the termagant, securing him by the arm and jerking him fiercely through the cell-door. "How dare you speak to any body here without leave? Come along, or I'll break every bone in your body."

With a swing of the arm, that sent the child whirling forward in fierce leaps, she landed him at her old seat, and sitting down, crowded the beautiful creature between her and the hot stove, setting one foot, twisting through a white slipper of torn and dirty satin, heavily in his lap to hold him quiet, while she went on with her French novel.

The poor little fellow bent his head, dropped his pretty hands on the floor, each side of him, and sat motionless and meek, like some heavenly cherub crushed beneath the foot of a demon. Once he struggled a little, and made an effort to creep back, for the heat pouring from the huge mass of iron which stood close before him had become insupportable.

The woman, without lifting her eyes from the book, put her hand down upon his shoulder with a fierce imprecation, and ordered him to be quiet. The poor infant dared not move again, though his face, his neck, and his little arms became scarlet with the heat, and perspiration stood upon his forehead like rain, saturating his golden hair, and even his garments. He lifted his soft eyes, full of terror and of entreaty, to the hard face above him, but it was gloating over one of those foul passages with which Eugene Sue has cursed the world, and the innocent creature shrank from the expression more than he had cowered from the heat. Tears now crowded into his eyes, and he turned them, with a look of helpless misery, upon the young girl who stood regarding him with looks of unutterable pity. Julia Warren could not withstand this look. She was no longer timid: the prison was forgotten now: her very soul went forth in compassion for the one being more helpless than herself, whom she might have the power to protect. She went softly up to the woman and touched her upon the arm; compassion gave the young creature that exquisite tact which makes generous impulses so beautiful.

"Please, madam, let the child stay with me a little longer, I will keep him very quiet while you read!"

The meek demeanor, the soft, sweet tone in which this was uttered, fell upon the sense like a handful of freshly gathered violets. The woman had loved pure things once, and this voice started her heart as if a gush of perfumed air had swept through it. She looked up suddenly, and fixing her large, bold eyes upon the girl, seemed wondering alike at her loveliness and courage in thus addressing her.

Julia endured the gaze with gentle forbearance, but she could not keep her eyes from wandering toward the child, who, seizing her dress with one hand, was shrouding his face in the folds.

"How came you here?" demanded the woman, rudely.

"I don't know," was the meek answer.

"Don't know, bah! What have you done?"

"Nothing!"

"Nothing!" repeated the woman, with a sickening sneer; "so you're not a chicken after all—know the ropes, ha! nothing! I never give that answer—despise it—always have the courage to own what I have the courage to act; its original, I like it. Take my advice, girl, own the truth and shame the—the old gentleman. He's an excellent friend of mine, no doubt, but I love to put the old fellow out of countenance with the truth now and then. The rest of them never do it—not one of them ever committed a crime in their lives—unfortunate, nothing more."

"Will you let me take up the child?" said Julia, with a pleading smile; "see, the heat is killing him!"

The woman glanced down at the little creature, half moved her foot, and then pressed it down again, but drew back a little dragging the child with her; but she resisted the effort which Julia made to release him.

"Not now, the child's mine; I'll make him as wicked as I like myself, but he shan't run wild among the prisoners!"

"Are you really his mother?" said Julia.

"Yes, I am really his mother!" was the mocking reply; "what have you against it?"

"Nothing, nothing, only I should think you would be afraid to have him here!"

"And your mother, she isn't afraid to have you here, I suppose."

"I have no mother!" said Julia, in a tone of sadness, that made itself felt even upon the bad nature of her listener.

"No mother, well don't mourn for that," said the woman, with a touch of passionate feeling. "Thank God for it, if you believe in a God, she won't follow you here with her white, miserable face: she won't starve to keep you from sin—or

die—die by inches, I tell you, because all is of no use. You won't see her crowded into a pine coffin, and tumbled into Potters' Field, and feel—feel in the very core of your heart that you have sent her there. Thank God—thank God, I say, miserable girl, that you have no mother!"

The woman had risen as she spoke, her imposing features, her whole form quivering with passion. Tears crowded into her lurid eyes, giving them fire, depth and expression. She ceased speaking, fell upon her seat again, and, covering her face with the soiled novel, sobbed aloud.

The child, released from the bondage of her foot, stood up trembling beneath the storm of her words, but when she fell down and began to weep, his lips grew tremulous; his little chest began to heave, and climbing up the stool upon which his mother crouched, he leaned over and kissed her temple.

This angel kiss fell upon her forehead like a drop of dew; she dashed the novel from her face and flung her arm over the child.

"Look," she cried, with a fierce sob, turning her dusky and tear-stained face upon the young girl. "He has got a mother, look on her, and then dare to mourn because you have none!"

"But I have a grandfather and grandmother that loves me as if I were there own child," said Julia, deeply moved by the fierce anguish thus revealed to her.

"And where are they?"

"My grandfather is here!"

"Here! how came it about? What is he charged with?"

Julia's lips grew pale as the word "murder!" fell from them. Even the woman seemed appalled by the mention of a crime so much more serious than she had expected.

"But you, they do not charge you with murder also?" she questioned, in a subdued voice.

"No!" said Julia, innocently. "They charge me with being a witness!"

Once more a torrent of fiery imprecations burst from the lips of that miserable woman—imprecations against a law hideous almost as her own sins. Julia recoiled aghast beneath this profane violence. The child dropped down from the stool and crept to her side, weeping violently. The woman saw this, and checked herself.

"Then you have really done nothing?"

Julia shook her head and smiled sadly.

"A beautiful country—beautiful laws, that send an innocent child to take lessons in life here and from women like us. Oh! my dear, it's a great pity you haven't been in the Penitentiary half a dozen times, lots of benevolent people would be ready to reform you at any expense then."

Julia smiled, dimly, she did not quite understand what the woman was saying.

"It makes my heart burn to see you here," continued the woman, vehemently, "it's a sin, a wicked shame, but I'll take care of you. There's some good left in me yet; just get acquainted with that little wretch and no one else; stay in your cell, the keeper won't let them crowd in upon you; the matron will be here by and-by. She'll be a mother to you, she's a Christian, a thorough, cheerful, hard-working Christian. I believe in these things, though I would not own it to every one; kind because she can't help it, without going against her own nature. I like that woman, there isn't a creature here wicked enough not to like her."

"When shall I see her?" questioned Julia, brightening beneath this first gleam of hope.

"To-morrow morning! perhaps before—I don't know exactly. But come go into my cell—they haven't given you one yet, I suppose—the whole gang of them are coming this way again."

Julia looked up and saw a crowd of women coming up from the grated door, where they had been drawn by some noise in the outer passage. Terrified by the dread of meeting that horrible old negress again, she grasped the little hand that still held to her garments, and absolutely fled after the woman who had entered the cell where she had first seen the child.

The prisoners were amused by her evident terror, and gathered around the entrance, but as Julia sat down upon the bed, pale and panting with affright, her self-constituted guardian started forward and dashed the iron door in their faces, with a clang that sounded from one hollow corridor to another like the sudden crash of a bell.

"There," she said, with a smile that for a moment swept away the fierce expression from her face, "I'd like to see one of them bold enough to come within arm's-length of that. My home's my castle, if it is in a prison; I've been here often enough to know my rights. If the laws won't keep you out of that gang, I will!"

It was wonderful the influence that gentle girl had won over the depraved being who protected her thus. After she entered the cell no rude or profane word passed the woman's lips. She seemed to have shut out half that was wicked in her own nature when she dashed the iron door against her fellow prisoners. Her large black eyes brightened with a sort of rude pleasure as she saw her child creep into Julia's lap, and lay his head on her bosom.

"How naturally you take to one another," she said, letting down the black masses of her hair, and beginning to disentangle the braids with her fingers, as if the pure eyes of her guest had reproached their unsteady state. "When I was a

little girl we had plenty of wild roses in a swamp near the house. It is strange I have not thought of them in ten years, but when I saw you and the child sitting there together, it seems as if I could reach out my hands and fill them."

Julia did not answer, her eyes were bent on the child who had ceased to cry, and lay quietly in her arms—so quietly that she could detect a drowsy mist stealing over his eyes. The woman went on, threading out her long hair in silence. After awhile Julia, who had been watching the soft, brown eyes of the child as the white lids dropped over them gradually like the closing petals of a flower, looked up with a smile, so pure, so bright, that the woman unconsciously smiled also.

"He is sound asleep," said the young girl, putting back the moist curls from his forehead. "See what a smile, I have been watching it deepen on his face since his eyes began to close."

The woman put back her hair with both hands, and turned her eyes with a sort of stern mournfulness upon the sleeping boy.

"He never goes to sleep on my bosom like that," she said, at last, with a bitter smile, and more bitter tone. "How could he? my heart beats sometimes loud enough to scare myself; I wonder if wild flowers really do blossom over Mount Etna, if they do, why should not my own child rest over my own heart?"

"My grandfather has told me that flowers do grow around volcanoes," said Julia, with a soft smile, "but it is because the fire never reaches them; if scorched once they would perish!"

"And my heart scorches everything near it. Is that what you mean?" said the woman, with

a degree of mildness that was peculiarly impressive in a voice usually so stern and loud.

"When you were angry to-day he trembled, when you wept he kissed you," answered the gentle girl, looking mildly into the dark face of her companion, whose fierce nature yielded both respect and attention to the moral courage that spoke from those young lips.

"Well, what if I do frighten him? we love that best which we fear most. It is human nature, at any rate it was my nature, and should be my child's," said the woman, striving to cast off the influence of which she was becoming ashamed.

"And did you ever fear any one?"

"Did I ever *love* any one?" was the answer, given in a voice so deep, so earnest, that it seemed to ring up from the very bottom of a heart where it had been buried for years.

"I hope so, I trust so—do you not love your child?"

The woman dashed back the entire weight of her hair with an impetuous sweep of one hand: then, with the whole Roman contour of her face exposed, she turned a keen look upon the young face lifted so innocently to hers. Long and searching was that look. The shadows of terrible thoughts swept over that face. Some words, it might be of passion, it might be of prayer—for bitterness, grief and repentance, all were blended in that look—trembled unuttered on her lips. Then she suddenly flung up her arms and falling across the bed, cried out in bitter anguish—"oh, my God!—my God! can I never again be like her?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## KEEPING THE TRYST.

### A SEQUEL TO "PLAYING AT CROSS PURPOSES."

BY MRS. JOSEPH C. NEAL.

#### CHAPTER I.

THE mid-day train from New York had arrived at Boston. There was a little bustle at the door of the Tremont House, as one carriage after another deposited its dusty burden. Out of the last, stepped two beautiful women, whose tasteful travelling dresses, together with the quantity of well conditioned carpet-bags, baskets and shawls, that were lifted out after them, told that theirs was a journey of leisure and enjoyment. The gentleman who seemed as their escort left them in the drawing-room, and returned to see that various enormous trunks were properly disposed of, and then he entered upon the register, the following familiar names.

"Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, Savannah, Georgia; Miss Josephine Bradford, New York city."

From this, dear ladies, you may come to a speedy conclusion, that our old friend, Clara Cuthbert, now Mrs. Freeman, was on her bridal tour, and Josephine as first bridesmaid attended her.

And while the ladies are making a dinner toilette, and Mr. Freeman is refreshing himself with a cigar, in the reading-room, we will take a glance in retrospect at the events of the past winter. Josephine passed the greater part of it with the Howards, in Philadelphia. Her brother, the only near relative of the orphan girl, unmarried and immersed in business, expressed himself "thankful to any one that would take Joe off his hands." Consequently after she had officiated as attendant at Clara's wedding in the early part of the summer, she had accepted the invitation cordially extended, to accompany them to Niagara and the lakes. Her brother shook her hand very heartily in parting, and informed her that she might draw on him for any amount, without scruple. Every one has a different method of displaying affection. This was Henry Bradford's, and we know of some people who would prefer it to any other demonstration.

It was strange how much Josephine had changed in these few months. Her gentle quietness of manner, her shrinking from general admiration, and the total absence of all coquettish display, perplexed Mr. Freeman as much as it pleased his little wife. At first he was disposed to regard it as a deeper policy, for he could but remark that she had more admirers than ever. The little

encouragement received by them refuted this suspicion, however, and at last he forgot that she had ever been any other than the lady-like, dignified woman, whose sprightly and intelligent conversation made her a most agreeable travelling companion.

It was now August, and our party, after having been at Saratoga, the Falls, and the Canadian lakes, were on their way for the promised tryst at Centre Harbor. Mrs. Cuthbert, who had been left at Brooklyn to pass the summer with an old friend, was to join them in Boston, and the Howards had gone on before.

The heavy dinner was concluded. Clara had driven out with Mr. Freeman on a shopping expedition, and Josephine, who was too weary to accompany them, resolved on a comfortable siesta. She had left a book in the drawing-room while waiting for dinner, a new novel in which she was much interested. So she turned from Clara's parlor, and went in quest of it. At this hour the room was nearly deserted. One little girl with her hair *a la Kenewig*, tormented the poor piano, and two younger children quarrelled for the possession of a favorite ottoman.

She was leaving the room before she saw that it had any other occupant, and then she noticed a gentleman, who was leaning by one of the windows, with his eyes fixed upon the street. His face was turned from her, but there was something in his air that re-called past associations. The soft, close curls that clustered about the well-formed head—the erect and graceful form—they had once been familiar, and in confirmation of the sudden suspicions, the low voice in which he was humming an air from "Lucia," sent a thrill of recollection to her heart. It was Mr. Lisle, who, for the first time since their parting at Centre Harbor, was before her!

For an instant she stood perfectly still, covering her face with her hands, and then stole away so noiselessly that Frederick Lisle did not know he had been looked upon by the same large, sad eyes that were even then haunting his memory.

It was quite dark when Josephine re-joined her friends in Clara's parlor. Mrs. Freeman was alone, and exclaimed at the feverish heat of Josephine's hand as she touched it. But Mr. Freeman opened the door at that instant, and Clara flew toward him as if they had been

parted for years, instead of for half an hour, and Josephine was spared any further comment.

"By the way, Miss Bradford," said he, playfully, lifting his little wife into an immense *fautieul*, "whose name do you think I just spied upon the register?"

With what an indifferent tone she suggested a recent acquaintance!

"Who but your old admirer, and my recreant friend Lisle. I've half a mind to cut him for refusing to act as my second, on this recent melancholy occasion," and he glanced toward Clara, who shook her head threateningly. "But, however, as we are somewhat at a loss for beaux this evening, I'll invite him to go out with us."

"Oh! do," said Clara. "I always admired Mr. Lisle. He must be on his way to meet us at Centre Harbor. He promised, I'm sure——" and then she stopped suddenly, for she remembered the unfortunate termination of that boat ride, and she began to fear that Josephine might not be altogether pleased with an arrangement that would bring her in close contact with a rejected suitor.

Josephine's lips quivered, but she did not look up. How thankful she was for the twilight! She would not have had Clara see the flush she felt rising to her forehead for worlds.

A silent and disagreeable ten minutes passed before Mr. Freeman's return, and then Josephine's heart sank within her, and she felt a chill of disappointment, as his footsteps sounded through the corridor alone.

"That Lisle has grown to be the most incomprehensible fellow," were his first words. "He hoped to pay his respects to Mrs. Freeman in New York; but is very much fatigued this evening, and has a thousand engagements into the bargain. According to his account he must have as many friends as Josephine has lovers, and a separate appointment with every one of them. I vowed he had not yet forgiven her rejection, whereupon he blushed like a girl, and began asking about Mrs. Freeman's health with the tenderest anxiety."

"Of course then he is not going to meet us at Centre Harbor."

"He might—he could not say. He had promised to meet his sister at Phillips' Beach to-morrow. Could not tell when he should get away. Miss Chester, the heiress we met at Centre Harbor last summer, you know, is of the party, and I'm half inclined to think he's engaged to her."

Poor Josephine! She knew he did not love her; that all these glances, these gently spoken words, she could even now re-call, were counterfeited. She could not allow herself to dwell upon the thought of him an instant, or on what he might have been to her, but for her own folly. There was mortified pride mingled with her regretful tears that night, for she plainly saw that

he avoided her, and still believed that she had wilfully coquetted through all their former acquaintance.

"How unwomanly I was," she thought, turning from the window where she had been watching the moonlight glide over the comparatively quiet streets. "Yet day after day he came to my side. He certainly looked all the affection I had hoped he felt. But it was just, and I must brave the punishment. How often have I deceived others. How often have these eyes looked wordless falsehoods!"

Her punishment had indeed been severe. For once she had felt the regard she had so often thoughtlessly assumed, and the lesson taught by its misapprehension she could never forget. Again and again had she re-called that scene, and as often hoped that he would some day know all, and—could she hope for it?—even love her. She had looked forward through all their journeyings to the promised tryst with an undefined hope that then everything would be explained. But now even this was taken from her, revealing in the anguish of her spirit at its departure how deep and earnest, in spite of its concealment, had been her regard for one who valued it not.

## CHAPTER II.

It was morning before she slept, and then her cheeks, though burning, were stained with tears, and the tangled mass of her dark hair streaming over the pillow, told how restlessly she had tossed during the summer night.

She woke from a strange dream, just as the first red rays of light heralded the sun. She thought she had once more been seated on the little island in the still lake. She was alone, and while she trembled with an undefined fear, a boat shot out of the bay. It came steadily toward her. It bore but one person, and at last she recognized the face of Mr. Lisle. He seemed eager to reach her side—she rose and stretched out her arms toward him, but just as he was about to spring upon the beach, the boat sunk in the dark waters, and she saw them close over him dividing them forever. A shriek burst from her lips, and she awoke.

She felt as if fainting, and hurried toward the open window. The cool morning air revived her. She laid her head upon her arm, and sobbed like a child from fear and weakness, as the recollection of yesterday's events returned mingling with her dream. The room was directly over the main entrance, and as she sat there a carriage was waiting in the street below. There was little noise as yet to disturb the morning stillness, and the impatient pawing of the horses, and the driver's oaths, arrested her wandering thoughts. Almost mechanically she looked out, the muslin



drapery of the curtain shrouding both her face and figure. The trunks were covered with white canvass, and bore in large letters the initials F. L. A solitary passenger hurried down the steps; his voice came distinctly to her ear as he bade the man drive fast. The door was closed with a quick, loud snap, and as the carriage rolled away she knew that Frederick Lisle was indeed parted from her. The dream in its conclusion at last had been prophetic. The dark, cold waters of indifference and mistrust had separated them.

She did not give way again to tears, but she pressed her hand over her forehead as one who would seek to drive away a ghastly vision. Once more her head pressed the pillow, and all became blended in a fitful sleep. When she woke again, hope and despair had alike given place to a strong resolve, a struggle to banish from her thoughts one who so evidently shunned her presence.

It astonished even herself, the careful exactness of her toilette that morning, and the few traces that appeared on its completion of the last night's mental conflict. She was complimented at the breakfast-table on the unusual brilliancy of her eyes and complexion. She heard the announcement of Lisle's early departure, as she sipped the fragrant coffee, with an air of extreme *nonchalance*. Clara looked relieved on noticing this, and buttered a hot roll as she hoped he would pass an agreeable life with Miss Chester, though from her observations on that young lady's disposition she thought the matter doubtful. Josephine smiled in reply, and the programme of the day's engagements was announced and discussed, Mr. Lisle's very existence seemingly forgotten on the next instant.

It may seem strange that one of whom she had known so little should have power to move the proud girl. She could not account for it herself. Others as manly, as intelligent, had offered devotion which had been rejected without a thought. And thus had she been won. First, her vanity enlisted by the involuntary homage to her beauty and sprightliness of one pronounced invulnerable: then her heart yielded to his evident interest, and finally scorn, or indifference to the prize he had so unconsciously won, completed the conquest. True, the time of their acquaintance had been short, but they had met daily and hourly then. In the intervening space she had brooded over its every event, until unconsciously to herself, her love had strengthened with the hope that soon he would know all. That hope was destroyed. He had shunned her—he was the affianced of another, and the thought of him had become a sin. And now with others who have suffered, she turned her longing eyes from the past to an unregarded future.

Mrs. Cuthbert arrived that evening, much to Clara's delight, who was as usual soon calling

"mamma"—"mamma!" any time the good lady chanced to be out of sight. She was always declaring she had so much to tell, but when they sat down for it she never could recollect half. Mrs. Cuthbert had grown very fond of "my son," as she now called Freeman, and she leaned on his arm with an air of confidence and pride that delighted Clara. In justice to the young husband we must say that devoted to his "bonny wee wife" as he was, he never forgot the comfort or the wishes of her mother. His deferential manner, which was not assumed, and his constant attentions had so won Mrs. Cuthbert's heart, that she often expressed her wonder to Josephine how "either she or Clara had managed to live without him so long."

It was the evening of a cloudless summer day when they arrived once more at Centre Harbor. None of the party spoke as the noisy stage-coach howled over the smooth road. Here and there they caught a glimpse of the placid lake. Often by the road-side they discovered some shady nook familiar to them in walks and drives, and recalling a crowd of recollections. Clara thought of her pride and folly which had so nearly wrecked her happiness. Her husband involuntarily clasped her hand as he remembered that here the precious treasure had been confided to him. Josephine sat with averted face, and more than once tears stood in her eyes, for recollection was most bitter.

At last they were all brought back to real life just as they swept round the broad curve that heads the bay, on which the little village stands.

"My dear," said good Mrs. Cuthbert, with a groan and sigh of weariness. "I do hope we shall have a good cup of tea to-night; and some of these nice trout. The air from the lake makes one really hungry."

### CHAPTER III.

JOSEPHINE BRADFORD had resolved to banish all thought of Mr. Lisle. She had come to the very last place she should have chosen for the attempt. Not a walk or ride but re-called him, and, struggle as she would, more than one solitary hour was passed in tears. The Howards noticed that the change from her old coquettish air was even more marked than when she had left them in the spring. There was nothing of the sadness of a "love sick girl" in her quiet movements; her pride forbade the confidence in which many would have indulged. So her friends could not account for the thorough change of character, but they all approved of it; and Josephine found as many others have done, that the love and respect of friends more than overbalanced the transient admiration of a crowd. Besides, the consciousness of a fault overcome has its own peculiar happiness.

Day after day passed in quiet enjoyment by most of the little party. Only once had the delinquent been alluded to, and then as Mr. Freeman read the name of Frederick Lisle among the arrivals at the Astor, Mrs. Howard remarked that he must have given up all thoughts of coming further northward. Josephine took up the Tribune which Mr. Freeman had thrown down, and as she saw the name so often in her thoughts, noticed directly below it that of his sister and Miss Chester. It was another proof that Freeman's suspicions of their engagement was correct.

It was but a few days after this that a fishing party was resolved on, and at the same time a whortleberry expedition to an island still beyond that.

Every one seemed disposed to do their utmost in contributing to the amusement of the rest. Josephine had been unusually cheerful for several days past; and now her spirits rose with every dash of the light oars. She sang, she smiled in that soft morning sunlight, and Clara whispered involuntarily to her husband—"is she not beautiful?"

It was a freak of Clara's, that, while Josephine had strolled off by herself round a little thicket of hemlock, the boat should push off and leave her alone until their return from berry hunting. It pleased the gentlemen to humor her, and when startled at finding herself thus deserted, Josephine waved hat and handkerchief for them to return, it pleased the boating-party still more to pretend a perfect unconsciousness of these demonstrations, and to push on.

I do not know what put so wild a scheme into Clara's busy brain, but you know when people are wild with the unrestrained freedom of a country ramble, they often do very ridiculous things, and consider them excellent jokes.

At first, it must be confessed, Josephine was disposed to be vexed. But the day was very lovely, the shade of the neighboring thicket delightful. It was, moreover, the very cove where the strange *dénouement* of Mr. Lisle's attentions had occurred little more than a year since, and finally she was almost grateful to Clara for having given her this quiet hour for re-calling the scene, and all its subsequent emotions. She sat for a long time on the very stone where Lisle had once been beside her. She was sad, yet not miserable. Who could have been so with that soft air bringing sweet perfume from the water-lilies over which it passed, sweet sounds from the opposite shore mellowed, as music ever is floating above the quiet waters. The mimic waves broke gently at her feet with a soothing murmur, and now and then a far-off skiff glanced by with snowy sail mirrored in the deep blue lake. It is true that tears fell through her hands as she shaded her

eyes from the bright sunshine, but another feeling than sorrow mingled with her regret. She was grateful, most grateful that her career of heartless self-seeking had been checked, and resolved in the stillness of her heart, that henceforth her fortune, her acquirements, every talent which had been so lavishly bestowed, should be devoted to making those around her happier and more content with life.

It was a deep reverie, and broken at last by the splashing of an oar. At first she did not look up, there were many besides themselves seeking amusement upon the lake that morning. But it came nearer. Larger ripples broke at her feet, and then she saw the skiff of which she had dreamed, with its single passenger, and that passenger was *Frederick Lisle*. It was no vision now! There was no dread mischance to separate them. The keel grated upon the pebbly beach—the light oar was thrown down, and once more they stood face to face, alone, by the lake side.

He, with earnest, sorrowful eyes, gazing without a word, as if he would read her very soul—she with cheeks still wet with tears, and a trembling, fluttering heart, that stayed the words of welcome her lips essayed to give. And thus the tale was told. How Frederick Lisle had in reality believed her false, yet, despite his reason, had given her his deepest love. He had not known it until the morning of their separation; not until her hand had trembled in his own—and he had spoken the words that sent a shaft quivering to the heart that he would have given worlds to believe true and noble. He tried to forget, but had sought her presence again and again, though she knew it not. Often he had watched her for hours in the crowded concert room, at the opera, when perchance she had been thinking of him as miles away. He did not seek to renew his acquaintance, yet he tracked her every movement. He had shunned the intimacy which his friend's bridal festivities would have brought, because he could not trust his own resolves. Then he heard how changed she had become; and his pulse leaped with a new hope. Could it be that she had not trifled with him after all? That his own hands had dashed aside the cup mantling with love and hope! This too he strove to banish as a vain dream; again he had fled her presence, even when fate seemed to have brought them together. But he could not rest. Amid the bustle of crowded watering-places, in his own home to which he restlessly turned, he was haunted by her presence. And now he had come, urged by an impulse which he could not resist, to know his fate. If it was disappointment he would strive to brave it—anything rather than this torturing uncertainty!

And then he clasped her hand. Once more after all that dreary separation. Again it trembled in his own—"blessed dream!" murmured those pale lips, "do not leave me——"

"It is no dream," said the pleading voice once more. "Tell me that I may hope, do not send me away in scorn again."

And then the girl knew that it was indeed reality; there were no dark waters between them now.

Perhaps you can imagine the scene which ensued when the boating party returned. I will not attempt to describe it. Clara protested that it was all a hoax. That they had been secretly betrothed all this while, and in excess of romance had resolved upon the time and place of astonishment to their friends a year before. "All this indifference?" said her husband.

"It was assumed, of course," answered the artful lady.

"And the separation?"

"Who knows what correspondence has been going on all the while; what braces on braces of letters Joe keeps for private consultation. Oh! you arch hypocrite, with your sudden and wonderful reformation!" You would have smiled to see how naturally the blushing girl looked up to Mr. Lisle to defend her.

It was an excellent time for explanations as they glided back to the shore. Josephine, screened in part as she sat in the bow of the boat, by the green whortleberry branches piled up in the centre, shining with their blue, delicious fruit; and Mr.

Lisle still clasping her hand, as if he too was fearful it was all a dream, and that she would vanish as suddenly as he had won her.

Clara was unmerciful in her raillery, and the Howards earnest in their congratulations. Mr. Lisle had not been very explicit in the first part of his narrative, and every one held the impression that he had really been rejected at first, until Josephine discovered it months after, and insisted on assuming her own share of mortification.

She might have seen this had she not been very much pre-occupied, when good Mrs. Cuthbert came up in her stately way just before dinner that day, and said—

"Well, my dear, I'm glad you thought better of it. Mr. Lisle is a fine young man."

Once more Josephine sat by the open window with the cool air coming in from the lake, and communed with her own heart; as on the night of Clara's engagement. But now there was no tumult there. Peace and unutterable joy filled her soul. The remembrance of early folly was the only shade upon the present, and she saw how wise had been the punishment which had taught her that the love of one far outweighed the admiration of many; the remembrance of past suffering, and knowledge of its cause serving as a talisman to keep her from future error.

A worldless prayer rose from her heart, as she looked out upon the calm night, of thankfulness for the gift she had that day received, the priceless gift of human love—for strength that she might never prove unworthy of the treasure.

## LOVE'S DESTINY.

BY J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

### CHAPTER I.

On the evening of the thirteenth of June, 183—, the eastern stage-coach, on the road to C——, contained but two passengers.

The elder of these was a gentleman about forty years of age, of medium height, powerfully made, with a full, broad chest, muscular arms, and shoulders which exhibited proportion, combining both strength and manly beauty. The features of this individual were such as to make a deep impression on a spectator, and not easily to be forgotten. His hair and beard were jet black, the former falling in careless profusion over his lofty forehead when he removed his hat, and the latter, heavy and long, totally concealing the contour of his broad, square chin. In addition to these traits, imagine a bold, prominent nose, heavy arched eyebrows shading a pair of sparkling black eyes, a firm lip, and a full, round cheek, and you have formed a pretty correct idea of the appearance of one of the principal characters in the following story.

His companion was near ten years younger than he, of a tall, slender and graceful figure, dark auburn locks, large blue eyes, and an intellectual forehead, lofty, prominent, and white as alabaster. His complexion was light, and clear as that of a girl; but, although the expression of his features indicated a less stern, passionate and enduring spirit than his companion's, it bespoke a brave and manly heart, capable of feeling in the highest degree the noblest impulses of our nature.

The acquaintance of these two individuals had commenced in the stage-coach, been cultivated there, and there, in all probability, it was destined to end. Yet, having travelled together over a disagreeable road, with nothing to amuse their minds save conversation, a familiarity, nay, a sort of earnest sympathy had sprung up between them, which might have ripened into a lasting friendship.

The younger of the two, his companion observed, was subject to frequent fits of melancholy abstraction, from which it was difficult to arouse him. It was evident something of a sad nature was weighing upon his mind, and the elder traveller endeavored in vain to make him cast off all care, and assist him in beguiling the tediousness of the journey with mirth and anecdote. Despairing of accomplishing this object,

he resolved to ascertain, if possible, the cause of his new friend's melancholy, and to offer him his assistance and sympathy. He spoke to him kindly on the subject, and told him that if he stood in need of friendly aid or counsel, he would never regret making a confidant of him.

"You are very kind," said the young man, "but I fear a history of my sorrows would fail to interest you."

"Do not fear that," said the elder traveller, "I am curious to learn why it is that the nearer we approach C—— the sadder you become, and I am anxious to assist you if to do so lies in my power."

"It is not probable you or any other human being, save *one*, could do anything for me," returned the young man, with a melancholy smile. "Yet, if you have patience to hear me, I will tell you what events have contributed to make me a most unhappy man."

"Proceed," said the other.

"But you will consider that I speak with you confidentially."

"Certainly."

"And that what I have to relate—at least a part of it—I do not wish to have you breathe to others, or even think of yourself after to-night."

"You have my word," said the elder traveller. "I can keep your secret, but I cannot promise never to think of your words again."

"True," sighed the young man. "I need not inform you, I suppose, that my present troubles are the result of an unhappy attachment."

"I had guessed as much."

"Very well. But you can't have imagined the peculiar circumstances of my case."

"That is what I am anxious to learn."

"Well, to begin," continued the young man, "some three years ago this summer, I was introduced to a young lady in L——, named Catharine Tilden——"

"Catharine Tilden?" repeated the elder traveller.

"Such was her name," continued his young friend. "She was the daughter of one of the most wealthy and influential men in Putman."

"Yes," said the other—"I have heard of him, I think."

"I have nothing to say of him—only, that he was an indulgent father, and that he had spared no pains to give his daughter all the accomplishments

"which can add to the attractions of a lovely woman. Catharine had improved the opportunities her parents gave her, and had grown up to be one of the most accomplished, as well as most lovely women I ever had the happiness to meet. Indeed I thought I had never seen her equal; I considered her as perfect a creature as ever existed in a human shape. What wonder, then, that I loved her?"

"That was a natural consequence."

"It was more; it was destiny. I was fated to love that woman as never woman before was loved; and I was fated to be beloved by her in return!"

"Ah!" exclaimed the traveller, with a start.

"You think that strange, I see," pursued the young man. "I thought so myself at the time, and think so now—but so it was! Catharine Tilden loved me with something like the love I felt for her. I passed four weeks in L—. You may think that a short period for such a passion as mine, or hers, to grow to be a part of our existence; but had you known how those four happy weeks were spent, the fact would not have excited your surprise. I saw her every day, and during the latter part of my stay in L— my time was spent in her society nearly altogether. Although she had appeared so lovely at first, every day of my acquaintance with her taught me that, having judged her from external appearances, I still knew nothing of her sterling worth. I soon found that she was a jewel more precious than even I could have imagined, and that in her love I possessed an inestimable gem."

"It was not long before I had made up my mind to make Miss Tilden my wife, and I was on the point of offering her my hand, when I received a letter from my friends, stating that my father lay at the point of death. I had no time to lose; I made hasty preparations to return home, and fly to the bedside of my father. It was no time to talk of marriage; so I tore myself from the arms of Catharine, and with a few hurried words of tenderness and regret at parting, left her, and took the stage-coach to return to my father's house."

"This was sixty miles distant in the town of P—. I found my father, as my friends had warned me, at the point of death. Day and night for seven weeks I was by his bedside, attending to all his wants, and giving him what consolation I could. I need not detail to you the distressing incidents connected with his last illness; it is enough to say that I had not been with him two months when the breath of life forsook him, and I was fatherless."

"I had written to Catharine during the second week after my departure from L—. Although expecting an immediate reply, I had not heard

from her at the time of my father's death. Then, and not till then, I wrote again. A month passed, and still I received no answer to any letters. I half forgot my grief for the death of my father, in my anxiety to know the cause of her strange silence. Again I wrote; and again there followed weeks of suspense and painful anxiety."

"I felt hurt. Had any but Catharine been thus negligent of replying to my earnest appeals for an explanation, I should have been roused to anger such as time could not easily have quenched. As it was I felt deeply grieved—nay, madly grieved—but I was not—I could not be angry."

"After a long delay, I resolved to write once more. I meant that the letter should decide my fate. I could not think of visiting one who did not think enough of my regard to write to me, and I determined never to see her face again, unless my last letter brought a reply, and a satisfactory apology for her silence."

"No answer, even to that letter, ever came! I was in despair. I cursed the day when first I saw Miss Tilden. I said to myself, 'I will forget her;' but I might as well have said to the winds, 'cease to blow.' I could not banish her image, although I deemed her false. She haunted me by day and night, and she was always lovely as when I saw her in person—when I thought she loved me."

"Late in the fall, being in ill health, I resolved to go to Italy, and set sail from New York about the last of November. I spent near two years in Europe, visiting all the principal cities on a portion of the continent, and making the tour of Great Britain. Yet my intercourse with the world, and the continued change of scene through which I passed, failed to erase the memory of my unhappy attachment."

"I returned home, and spent the winter in H—, where I was born. I did not visit L—, nor did I hear a word from Catharine Tilden. Since the beginning of May I have been travelling over the New England states, and now I am on my way home to H—."

"Here I have an incident to relate, which has revived all my memories, and kindled into a flame that burns stronger and fiercer than ever my love for Catharine."

"Five days ago I passed through the town of C—, which we are now approaching. The stage-coach in which I was travelling stopped to change horses, and considerable delay was anticipated on account of some neglect on the part of the hostler, which I need not stop to explain. As it was a lovely afternoon, I resolved to walk on and enjoy a pleasant stroll through the country before overtaken by the stage."

"I was so delighted with the beauty of the

country, all fresh and green as it was in the verdure of early summer, that I thought of little else. Night was soon approaching. I had walked several miles. It was then that I began to wonder that the stage had not come up, not having anticipated a walk of more than half a mile before being overtaken. Still I kept on. At length it was beginning to grow dark, and I felt some alarm, and considerable fatigue.

"I was approaching a small, neat country-seat, surrounded by luxuriant shade trees, and orchards and gardens tastefully laid out.

"This," thought I, 'would be a delightful resting-place. I could pass the time here very pleasantly until the stage arrives. I think I'll venture to make a call.'

"I opened the light wicket, and strolled leisurely up the gravel-walk by which the house was approached. Arrived at the door, I was readily admitted by a servant, when I explained the occasion of my unceremonious visit. I was shown into a tasteful parlor, and took my seat at a window which looked to the westward through lattice work, luxuriant vines, flowers and refreshing foliage. The sun was setting; and I sat gazing out upon the beautiful scene before me, when I was startled from the reverie in which I was indulging by the entrance of a lady.

"I turned to regard her. She was evidently unaware of my presence, for she had passed across the room, and now her back was toward me. Her form was exceedingly graceful, and I knew her features must be of corresponding beauty.

"Slowly, as if still unconscious of my presence, she turned, and I saw her face. I started. I knew I had seen those features before. I was already upon my feet, leaning forward in the intensity of my eagerness to know if I was right in my first impression, when she raised her eyes to mine.

"Oh, God! I shall never forget that look, nor the shriek that followed! She sank upon a lounge, pale as death, and trembling with agitation.

"Catharine Tilden!"

"My lips syllabled her name, and I tottered forward, clasping my hands, and gazing at her with emotions you may easily imagine. My first impulse was to throw myself at her feet, but I remembered how my love had been slighted, and my pride restrained me. Pride, too, overcame my confusion and agitation, and restored me to myself.

"Catharine Tilden!" I repeated, in calmer accents, 'I little thought to meet you here!'

"Leave me," she gasped, covering her face with her hands—"I cannot look at you!"

"I scarcely wonder at it!" said I, bitterly.

"Indeed!"

"The word was uttered as if with a burst of indignation, and in an instant her hands were dropped upon her lap, and her eyes were raised to mine with a look which went to my soul. That look was full of swelling pride, struggling agony and smothered grief!

"I can look at you!" she said, in a voice tremulous with passion, but with a look and gesture of resolution and pride. 'I am not the one to dread an interview, Charles Wiley! It is not I that am guilty of wronging a heart composed of confidence and love! No, Charles Wiley! I can look you in the face!'

"What means this outburst?" I asked, with affected coolness. 'I have not accused you of wronging any one, Miss Tilden.'

"True," said she, in a softened tone—"true! But why are you here? Leave me, I pray you."

"Miss Tilden——"

"I cannot hear you, sir. You should go at once—indeed you *must* go!"

"Is then my presence so particularly disagreeable?" I asked, in a tone of bitter irony. 'But believe me, false lady! I will not leave you, now that I have met you, until I have reminded you of your false-heartedness!'

"Sir! ——"

"Nay, look not at me with such a feint of surprise and indignation! If I *have* been made your dupe, I am not so far gone in simplicity as to be awed by such dramatic points.'

"Sir, explain yourself."

"I will, madam, with pleasure," said I. 'You cannot have forgotten on what terms we parted.'

"No—no!" burst from the lips of Catharine.

"But yet, after all that had passed between us," I continued, 'you did not see fit to deign a single reply to my letters——'

"Your letters!"

"Yes, Miss Tilden."

"What subterfuge is this?" cried Catharine, 'I never received a single letter from you—not a note nor line!'

"I was staggered. A new light burst upon my mind. It might be that the letters miscarried—that Catharine was not false! In an instant I was at her feet.

"For God's sake!" I exclaimed, 'tell me truly if you did not receive my letters!'

"She repeated her assertion.

"And you—you loved me," I murmured.

"I *did* love you," said Catharine, once more covering her face with her hands.

"A scene followed I will not attempt to describe. On my knees before her, I repeated all my vows of love, and earnestly entreated her to forgive me for suspecting her of being false. I believed her; she believed me, too, in turn. Oh,

have I cursed the accidents which had been the occasion of the miscarriage of my letters! Thus long I had been made miserable by a simple misunderstanding—a mistake. But I thought she might still love me; I deemed that we might yet be happy. I was cruelly undeceived!

"Suddenly starting up, she repulsed me, and withdrew the hand she had suffered me to clasp, for a moment, in my own.

"'Oh, my God!' she exclaimed, wildly, 'why have we met again? I am miserable—leave me—let me die!'

"'Dear Catharine,' said I, still on my knees before her, 'why do you talk thus? You know that I love you—you know—'

"'And it is that which makes me miserable!' sobbed she. 'You must not love me—I must not love you—I *will* not love you—I *do* not love you! There, now, go—we must never meet again!'

"'Catharine! dear Catharine!—'

"'You must not address me thus, Charles Wiley. It is wrong—you know it is wrong! But perhaps—perhaps you do not know that—that *I am married*—'

"'Married!'

"'Yes—yes—I am another's!'

"Oh, I cannot describe to you, my friend, the emotions produced by this announcement. I rose to my feet; I staggered across the room as if I had been stunned by a blow. I was dreaming—I felt like one falling over a precipice, and sinking inevitably into an unfathomable gulf.

"Soon, however, I recovered. I approached Catharine. She was sitting on the sofa, sobbing like a girl with her face hid in the folds of her handkerchief. I forgot my own sufferings in my sympathy for hers.

"I spoke to her kindly. I endeavored to soothe her, and to calm her mind, and soon succeeded. A long and earnest conversation ensued, from which I learned that she loved me still. She told me the history of her sufferings. She told me all!

"Devotedly as she loved me, when weeks and months had passed after our separation, and she had received no letters from me, she began to believe me false. Then there was a report circulated in L—that I had married another! My silence, she thought, corroborated the report. She distrusted me, and resolved to think of me no more.

"Not a week had passed after my departure from L—, when an old acquaintance of her family visited her, and immediately began to devote his attentions to her. He was what all considered a desirable *match*. Feeling indignant toward me, she encouraged his addresses. She respected him highly—she thought that she might love him. I cannot explain all—but one thing I

know to my sorrow, at the end of a year they were married!

"Married! My Catharine became another's, while still her heart was mine. She had not ceased to love me, more than I had ceased to worship her. And thus we met again, and learned that we were beloved by each other, and learned at the same time that it was too late—that our very love was sinful.

"Night had now come on. The stage-coach, which, I afterward learned, had been delayed by an accident to one of the wheels, had passed the house unobserved by me, and I was left behind. It became necessary for me to depart, as the hour grew late. She had made me put off the character of lover, and use the language of simple friendship—for deeply as she loved me, she was too strongly armed by virtue to allow me to speak again of love. Her husband was gone from home, and she did not expect him back in more than a week, but his absence did not make her forget that she had a husband.

"The clock struck eight, and I rose to take my leave. Our parting was not such as it was when we separated for the first time! She was so sad and pale that to look at her made my heart ache.

"'Shall we ever meet again?' I asked.

"She sighed and shook her head.

"'Hear me,' said I, 'in five days I shall return this way. Your husband, you say, you do not expect in more than a week. Can I not see you, even if for but a moment, and bid you an eternal adieu?'

"'Yes, yes!' she murmured, in a tremulous voice, 'if you will go now.'

"And thus we parted," said the young man, in conclusion. "I am now within half a mile of her home. In a few minutes I shall see her again. You know now why I have been at times so thoughtful on the way!"

## CHAPTER II.

The young traveller, having finished his narrative, leaned his head upon his hand, and sat for several minutes without uttering a word. His companion, who listened with considerable interest, made no remarks when the story was ended, but bent his eye upon the young man with a strange smile, as if he either despised his weakness or pitied his fate.

Not a word was spoken by either until they were aroused by the voice of the driver—

"Gentlemen," said he, as he drew in the reins, "I think this is the place where you wished to be left."

Charles Wiley looked about him. He recognized the country-seat of Catharine's husband. He started to his feet.

"Yes," said he, "I stop here."

"And so do I," said his companion, with a strange smile.

"You!" exclaimed Charles, in surprise.

"I think you can have no objection——"

"Sir!——"

"Oh, don't be alarmed, my friend. You remember I said I would assist you if in my power. I am a man of my word. But you must let me assist you in my own way. I think the best thing I can do for you is to stop here with you."

"But, sir——"

"Don't attempt to dissuade me," said the elder traveller, with the same incomprehensible smile.

"You will find me obstinate."

"But, sir, I cannot conceal my surprise," began Charles.

"You will not be surprised *when you know my motive!*" replied his companion, in a significant tone.

Charles was astounded at this appearance of audacity, but he resolved to stop at all events, whether his new acquaintance did or not; and having directed the coachman to leave his trunks at a hotel in C——, he once more approached the residence of Catharine.

His companion followed close by his side, allowing him to lead the way to the house. The night was not dark, and when Charles at length rang at the door, and turned to observe his friend's features, he was startled by their almost fiendish expression.

Charles was readily admitted, and his companion followed him into the house. Charles entered the parlor, while the latter was still lingering in the hall. Catharine was there. She started at seeing him.

"Oh, Charles," she said, "why did you come? You should not have done it."

Charles gave her a look of reproach.

"Nay," she said, "you know we ought not to meet—other duties forbid it—therefore farewell—I did not mean you should come," she added, bursting into tears.

Catharine ceased speaking. Charles, too full of emotion for words, had not spoken. Suddenly Catharine's face flushed crimson. Then she became pale as death and sunk backward, clasping her hands, and staring wildly at some object beyond Charles, near the door. The young man turned. His fellow traveller stood before him!

"This is not honorable, sir!" said Charles, in a severe tone and manner. "You intrude, sir, and I feel——"

"For God's sake," cried Catharine, springing between them, "do not irritate him—for it is——it is——"

"Who?" demanded the young man.

"My husband!" gasped the lady.

Charles recoiled, thunderstruck.

"I intrude, do I?" said the other, with a contemptuous smile. "I intrude in my own house! My dear sir, I admire your insolence! Sit down, sir, and make yourself at home," he continued, with bitter politeness.

Great as was the young man's consternation on discovering that he had made a confidant of Catharine's husband, he did not lose his self-possession, but prepared himself to act his part boldly and well. Even a less observing man could have seen that beneath the affected carelessness of the husband, there slept a terrible spirit meditating revenge. Charles saw it, and trembled, not for himself, but for her he loved.

"Catharine," said the husband, "I think our kind friend can dispense with your company for the present. You will see that refreshments are prepared for him and me, for we have travelled far together to-day, and are somewhat fatigued. You will be so good as to excuse my wife for a few minutes, Mr. Wiley."

"Certainly," said Charles.

It was a great relief for Catharine, confused and terrified as she was, to be allowed to leave the room.

She retired, not daring to look at Charles.

"This is a tolerable good joke," said her husband, when left alone with Charles. "Don't you call it so? Isn't it very pleasant?" he added, with a bitter smile, "to know from such good authority that my wife loves another! Ha! ha! But it seems to me you don't see the humor of the thing—you look pale and sober when you should be laughing at the joke with me. Come, rouse yourself, and let us be merry!"

"Mr. Harwood," returned Charles, seriously, "you must know I feel in no very merry mood. If you do, I am glad of it, and I hope you will be so for many a day."

Charles had sat down, but now he arose to take his hat.

"You are not going!"

"Yes, sir."

"Pshaw! what is the matter with you?" cried Mr. Harwood, with feigned surprise. "Ha! I see it! You are jealous of me—I am in your way! But that is foolish. You have no cause to be jealous, I should think! Do sit down again. I must have your company to-night—we will have a merry time!"

But Charles remained standing.

"Before I go, Mr. Harwood," he said, "permit me to say one word. Your wife, in the matter of which I have spoken to you, is not in the least to blame. I am the culpable party. Now, before I go, promise to say nothing on the subject to her. If you feel that some one should be punished,



pursue me with your vengeance. I am prepared for you at any time."

"What foolish talk!" exclaimed Mr. Harwood. "Have I said I attached blame to any one, or that I thought of vengeance? You mistake me, sir. I like you, and I confess I should have acted as you did under similar circumstances. Don't fear for Catharine. I feel more like making a merry night of it than like making a great fuss about what I cannot help. So don't think of leaving me until morning—don't."

Charles knew not what to think of this strange language, or of the still stranger manner of the speaker. He felt compelled to stay, and once more took his seat.

Soon after, a servant girl brought in a few biscuits, a plate of cheese, a cold fowl, knives, forks, plates, glasses, and a bottle of wine.

"Follow my example," said Harwood, drawing his chair to the table. "You must stand in need of refreshments as well as myself. Here is some excellent Madeira," he continued, filling the glass of his unwilling guest—"I know you will pronounce it capital."

Charles drank to his health.

"But where is Catharine?" asked Harwood, of the servant.

"She is indisposed, and begs to be excused," replied the girl.

"Indisposed! hem! very well!" he remarked. "You can go, Betsy. I am sorry, on your account, Mr. Wiley," he continued, raising his glass to his lips, "that Catharine is not able to keep us company. It must be a great disappointment. Will you try a piece of the chicken, sir? Please to help yourself to cheese. Allow me to fill your glass."

"Thank you," said Charles. "Will you have the goodness to pass me the pitcher of water. This is excellent Madeira, but it is rather strong."

"Drink," said Harwood. "The stronger the better; it will do you good. It will make you merry; it will make us both merry, and we should be very merry to-night."

Charles drank, for he scarce knew what he did. Harwood's strange, incomprehensible manner fascinated him, and when he saw him raise his glass to his lips, he did the same.

An hour passed. Charles was beginning to be gay, while his mysterious companion gradually grew serious. He saw that the more the latter drank the soberer he became. All the time his eyes twinkled with a strange fire, which was not without a meaning.

It was near midnight, when Mr. Harwood proposed a game of chess. He had drank four times as much wine as Charles, but he was far more serious than when he tasted his first glass. Charles, who felt that he himself had drank a

little too much, was astonished that his companion was not dead drunk. Yet he appeared so perfectly sober, that Charles thought he himself would be no match for him in the game he proposed, and hesitated about accepting the challenge.

"Remember, we have a grand stake to play for!" said Harwood.

"What stake?"

"My wife!"

"Catharine!" cried Charles, in surprise.

"Why not?" said Harwood. "She cannot belong to both of us. Either you or I must possess her alone. Some would propose to fight for her, but I choose to play for her."

Charles felt his blood run cold. He scarce knew what he did. The twinkling eye of his rival was upon him, and he unconsciously began to assist in placing the chess-men on the board.

From the time the game began neither player raised his eyes. Their moves were rather rapid for a serious game, but nothing was done without study. Both seemed absorbed completely; they neither spoke nor stirred, except when they had occasion to utter the monosyllable—"check!" or to move their men.

Two hours passed: at the end of that time, the game seemed drawing to a close. The adversaries had nearly equal forces left, and there seemed but little choice in the position of their pieces. At length Charles Wiley, after having matured his final plan of attack, and seen in what way, by a succession of moves, he could defeat his adversary, pushed boldly forward in an unexpected quarter. His plan met with all the success he expected, and he had won the game.

"Checkmate!"

Uttering the word with a quick, exultant chuckle, the young man, for the first time, raised his eyes from the board. He glanced at his defeated adversary and shuddered. Harwood was still bending over the chess-board, with his eyes fixed intently on the men. For five minutes he neither moved nor spoke, and Charles sat gazing at his fixed brow and motionless frame in mingled awe and surprise.

At length Harwood slowly raised his head, and bent his piercing eyes calmly on Wiley's face.

"You have won!"

The words were uttered in a deep, solemn tone, which thrilled to the young man's heart.

"Won—won," Charles repeated, wildly—"won what?"

"Catharine!"

"Your wife!"

"She that was my wife. You have won her, and I give her up to you."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Charles, with a shudder. "I am not the man you take me for.

Catharine can be nothing to me as long as she has a husband living."

"Ah, I see!" sneered Harwood. "You would like to put me out of the way before you take my wife. So, I don't see but we shall have to fight after all. Well, if you wish it, we will fight for Catharine!"

The husband produced two pistols from a closet near by, and laid them on the table, together with the necessary appendages.

"We will fight for her," he repeated. "We will fight with the muzzles against each other's breast. Only one of the pistols shall be loaded with a ball. That pistol shall be taken by chance, as I will show you. Thus, one of us will be killed, and the other will live unmolested in the possession of Catharine. Help me to load!"

"No, I will not," said Charles.

"Sir!"

"I have nothing against you. You have never injured me intentionally; I cannot fight you; I have not the heart to kill you."

Mr. Harwood sneered, and once more fixed his eyes on Charles.

"You are deceived," said he, "I have injured you. I have injured you intentionally, and wronged you foully."

"How?"

"You have not guessed then how your letters miscarried."

"No!"

"Then I have the pleasure of informing you! When I went to L—— to marry Catharine, I heard of her attachment for you. I resolved to divide you—to win her myself. I was an intimate friend and confidant of the family. Hence you perceive that it was an easy thing for me to arrange matters so that all her letters passed through my hands. Yours, Mr. Wiley, I destroyed——"

"Villain!" muttered Charles, springing toward him with an impulse of indignation and rage. "I will be revenged for this."

"Certainly," said the other, coolly, "I have just suggested a method. See that I load these pistols right—one with a ball, and the other without."

Charles suppressed his passionate impulses, in order to watch the process of loading. The pistols were soon charged—one to kill, the other to do no harm.

"Turn your back now," said Harwood, "for a moment."

Charles did as desired. His adversary laid both weapons on the table, wrapped in handkerchiefs, and placed side by side.

"Now look this way," he said. "The pistols are in those handkerchiefs. Take your choice! I will not know which you take."

Charles shut his eyes, while Harwood turned

his back, and stretched out his hand at random. The pistol it touched he seized, and opening his eyes divested it of its shroud. The weapons were so exactly alike that he could not tell which he had chosen, and the handkerchiefs being similar, Harwood knew not which remained for him. Thus they were armed.

The two adversaries took their stations face to face and breast to breast. Each cocked his pistol and placed the muzzle against his adversary's bosom.

"When I give the word, fire," said Mr. Harwood.

"It will make no difference which fires first," replied Wiley, with a smile. "If I have the pistol charged with ball, I shall kill you whether you fire before I do or at the same time; and *vice versa*. But you may give the word."

"Thank you," said Harwood. "Look me in the eye."

A moment of fearful silence followed. The two adversaries stood like statues. Not a muscle moved. Harwood was very pale, and there was a diabolical smile upon his lips. On the other hand Charles' face was slightly flushed, and his finely chiseled lips were compressed with an expression of determined courage and revenge. Harwood's eye trembled as before; Charles' blazed with a steady fire; and the two gazed at each other as if they gazed their last. Each with frame erect, right foot advanced, and hand raised to a level with the breast of his antagonist, stood waiting the decision of fate!

"Fire!" said Harwood.

At the instant both triggers were pulled. There was a sudden burst of flame from the muzzle of each weapon, and a deafening report followed. Harwood staggered to the floor. Charles Wiley stood erect!

A moment after Catharine burst into the room. She saw her husband lying on the floor, and her lover gazing at him calmly, with folded arms.

"Oh, God! What have you done?" she shrieked.

Charles started. His eye fell upon her who had been the cause of the crime he had committed. He sprang toward her and threw himself at her feet.

"Catharine—dear Catharine!" he exclaimed, "you see what I have done. I have killed your husband, but he would have it so! It was he that destroyed my letters, and by that unmanly act made us both unhappy. I have had my revenge!"

"Oh, Charles!" exclaimed Catharine, shrinking with horror from his touch—"you have done a fearful thing—murder—murder!"

"No, no!" gasped the young man. "It was no murder—it was in a duel that I killed him, and it was he that gave the challenge. Do not blame me, for I was carried away with passion.

But, Catharine—dear Catharine, fly with me now—for I must escape to a foreign land, and I cannot leave you here!”

“Fly with you! the murderer of my husband!” exclaimed Catharine, with a gesture of disdain and noble pride—“never! But go—I would not have you taken—you must escape! Fly, Charles!”

“Never—never without you!” said Charles, firmly.

“Consider,” cried Catharine, wildly. “You must not be seen here after killing my husband. For, you see, my honor—my honor is at stake! Oh! if you love me—if you respect me—go!”

“I obey,” said Charles, calmly, “I leave you if you will not fly with me. Ah, I admire your feelings—I respect your firmness—and I must leave you forever! Farewell! Farewell!”

He clasped her hand, and held it passionately to his lips. The moment after he was gone.

Catharine was alone with the body of her husband.

She bent over him, gazing wildly at his features; then her heart sickened, her brain reeled, and she sank fainting upon his bosom.

It was a scene for a painter. The wife swooning upon the body of her husband, the blood flowing from the wound in his breast and staining her own white garment, the pistols lying on the floor, the chess-men and wine-bottles on the table, and the lamp which flung its sickly, fitful glare over all!

Such was the scene that met the eyes of the servants who soon rushed into the room.

An alarm was raised, the neighborhood was aroused, and surgeons and magistrates were called in.

At daylight the house was crowded with the benevolent and the curious. Harwood had not yet breathed his last. The ball, it appeared, had struck a steel button, and glanced aside, so that it had not proved immediately fatal.

At noon the surgeons told the half distracted wife that there were faint hopes of her husband's recovery.

In the evening there was no more unfavorable symptom, and the hopes of Harwood's friends were strengthened. Catharine watched by his bedside continually, doing everything for him in her power, and praying heaven that he might live!

On the following day there was a change, but that change was in the favor of Mr. Harwood.

A week from that time he was slowly recovering.

At the close of a fortnight he was pronounced out of danger. He was even able to sit up.

But Mr. Harwood was now a changed man. The period of passion had passed, and during the time when he lay at the point of death, he had had an opportunity of reflecting calmly on the

events we have related, and of seeing his own conduct in its true light. From the first to the last it had been culpable, and unworthy of a man; and now he saw it so and repented. He forgave Catharine, and begged her to pardon him for separating her from the man of her choice, and for making her unhappy for life. Catharine forgave him freely!

### CHAPTER III.

Two months subsequent to the events we have related, Mr. Harwood had almost entirely recovered.

One day Catharine entered the room where he was reclining on a lounge, and took a seat by his side. She was pale and melancholy, as she had always been since her last interview with Charles Wiley, and she seemed now about to commence a serious conversation with her husband.

“Mr. Harwood,” said she, “I have a request to make.”

“Speak it,” replied her husband. “I grant it before it is made, in return for the kindness you have manifested toward me during my illness.”

“I have been kind then.”

“Oh, yes; kinder than I deserve, dear Catharine. Yet you have been cold toward me—as if you acted from a sense of duty and benevolence rather than from love.”

“Well,” said Catharine, “I think you would not be surprised if I should inform you that such has been the case.”

Harwood groaned aloud.

“I cannot conceal from you,” continued Catharine, “that since I learned the part you acted in winning me—(I refer to the affair of the letters)—I no longer regard you with the affection a wife should feel for her husband. This is what I have to say to you: Now that I have watched over you until you have completely recovered, I wish to be released from the duties of a wife, for henceforth I remain your wife only in name.”

Harwood started up, changing color, and casting a hurried glance at his wife.

“What do you say?”

“I ask for a separation.”

Catharine spoke in a calm, firm tone, and her clear, dark eye met the wild stare of her husband without betraying any emotion.

“I will go home to my father,” said she. “I have advised with him, and he has approved of my determination. Let me be where I will I shall never be happy again, but it will be a relief to——”

“To see my face no more!” interrupted Harwood, with a sigh. “I know it; I understand your feelings!”

“And you grant my request?” said the young woman.

"Catharine, my noble-hearted wife!" exclaimed her husband, throwing himself at her feet. "Can you not forget my baseness toward you, as you have forgiven it? Can you not regard me with the feelings of a wife? For—I love you more than I ever loved you before; you are necessary to my existence!"

Catharine was prepared for this outburst of feeling.

"I have spoken," said she, calmly as before. "Henceforth I am your wife only in name. I ask for a separation."

"And you shall have it!" replied her husband, rising to his feet, and conquering his emotion. "I will grant you anything you ask, although it tears out my heart-strings!"

"I thank you," said Catharine.

A week from that time the young wife was once more beneath the paternal roof, devoting herself to promote the happiness of her father's family, and of all about her.

For a time Mr. Harwood lived in loneliness. He was wretched and sick of life. The memory of his injured, unhappy wife, drove him almost to distraction, and caused him to become morose and solitary.

At length he resolved to try the effects of travel to dissipate his melancholy thoughts. He spent the winter in the West Indies, and early the following spring commenced a tour through the southern states. In the month of June, a year from the night on which our story opens, he found himself in St. Louis.

It was evening, and he was sitting in the reading-room of his hotel. There were but few gentlemen present, and he was reclining lazily upon two chairs, with his elbows resting upon a table, when some new company entered.

One was a tall, dark complexioned, reckless individual, dressed in the height of fashion, and sporting a diamond ring and a silver-mounted cane. His moustache was curled with the most tasteful precision, his long, flowing, raven locks seemed to have that moment come from the hands of a barber, and his white kid gloves were fitted nicely to a hand small and delicate as a woman's.

This personage, followed by several who seemed to be humble imitators of his inimitable manners, entered the room and took a seat, appearing to feel perfectly at home.

"What an oppressive atmosphere!" he said, taking off his hat, and wiping his brow with a white handkerchief, beautifully embroidered, "it is enough to suffocate one!"

He placed his hat on the table by the side of Mr. Harwood. This gentleman, his attention being attracted by the remark, turned to cast a glance at the speaker, and by the movement knocked the stranger's hat upon the floor. Seeing

that he was in the presence of an individual belonging to a class he despised, Mr. Harwood, without saying a word, coolly picked up the hat and placed it on the table.

"Sir," said the stranger, with a most insolent look, "that is my hat. You knocked it upon the floor."

"I am very well aware of the fact," replied Mr. Harwood.

"You knocked it upon the floor," repeated the stranger, with a languid air, once more pressing his embroidered *mouchoir* across his brow.

"And I picked it up again," said Mr. Harwood, coolly.

"Very true; I am obliged to you for the condescension," returned the other, with a supercilious smile. "But, sir, I must beg leave to remind you that you made no apology."

"I considered none necessary," said Mr. Harwood.

"Very well, but I must be allowed to differ from you. I consider that an apology is necessary."

"Sir," said Mr. Harwood, indignantly, "if I had knocked your hat out of doors, I would not have made an apology. It is not my way. Nor would I have apologized had I made a slight mistake, and kicked you out instead."

"Hem! this is a good one!" said the stranger, with the same insolent air, and the same supercilious smile. "I admire you, sir, as a splendid specimen of ungentlemanly impudence! But you will apologize, sir."

"To a puppy like you?—never!"

And Mr. Harwood struck the table, as if to nail the argument with his fist.

"Excellent!" said the gentleman, with the moustache, silver-mounted cane, and white kid gloves. "I should be happy to make your acquaintance, sir. Here is my address; will you be so kind as to favor me with yours?"

Mr. Harwood looked at him for a moment contemptuously, but seeing that the affair had become serious, and that he could not make an honorable retreat, he gave the stranger his card.

"You will hear from me, sir, to-morrow morning," said the stranger, making a polite bow. "I trust I shall have the pleasure of exchanging warm salutations with you. I wish you a good evening."

So saying, the *exquisite*, accompanied by his friends, strolled leisurely away, leaving Mr. Harwood to his reflections. The latter looked at the card which had been given him, and read—

"C. H. Mortimer, ——— House, St. Louis."

Being a stranger in the place, Mr. Harwood took the liberty of inquiring of a gentlemanly looking stranger, who had witnessed the altercation, who Mr. Mortimer was. In answer to his question, he received the pleasant information

that he was an individual famous throughout the town for his exquisite manners, for his skill and good fortune at the gaming-table, and for the number of duels he had fought and killed his man.

Mr. Harwood, not in the least disconcerted, told his informant that he was a stranger in St. Louis, and that he should have to find some experienced individual to be his *friend* in the expected duel with the exquisite. Upon which his new acquaintance gave him his address, and offered to negotiate the business with his adversary.

The result of this adventure was, Mr. Harwood, on the following day, in the afternoon, fought his antagonist with pistols; and at the first fire received a ball in his right side, which terminated the affair.

While C. H. Mortimer, Esq., walked off with his friends, and stepped smilingly into his carriage, Mr. Harwood was carried to his hotel by his surgeon and his friend.

The wound was pronounced exceedingly dangerous, and the surgeon was unable to extricate the ball. Mr. Harwood manifested no alarm, but calmly prepared himself to undergo any suffering, and to meet with any fate.

The remainder of the day, and during a greater part of the following night, he lay in great pain, which nothing could alleviate; and it was not until near the dawn of another day that he was able to sleep.

At about the middle of the forenoon, the attendants brought him word that a gentleman, calling himself an old acquaintance, wished to see him.

"Show him in immediately," said Mr. Harwood.

A minute after a young man entered, and advanced to the bedside of the wounded man. Mr. Harwood looked at him, and uttered an exclamation of surprise. It was Charles Wiley!

"You are the last individual," he murmured, "whom I should have expected to see."

"My visit need occasion you no surprise," said Charles, "I have been spending a few days in the city; and this morning I saw an announcement stating that you had fought a duel and had been wounded. I thought you might need the assistance of a friend, and came to see you."

"This is more than I can bear!" groaned Mr. Harwood. "I have done you much injury, and you now return good for evil. You know that I have been your enemy, and you come to do me good!"

"Do not speak of it," said Charles. "I know your history, and can pardon all. Since the night on which I fled, thinking I had killed you, I have reflected much and been a better man. Until I learned, through a friend, that you recovered, I

was most wretched; and since I was informed that, after the affair of that night, and your separation from your wife, you had been most unhappy, you have had my sympathy. Hence you will not be surprised that I have come to visit you, and you will not refuse my offer to assist you as far as lies in my power."

Mr. Harwood could not reply for some minutes, so completely was he overcome by Charles' kindness. When at last he spoke, it was to express his gratitude.

From that moment Charles Wiley became the constant attendant of Mr. Harwood. We may be surrounded by every comfort, and we may have the most faithful servants to do our bidding, but if we are among strangers, who attend us but for the sake of common humanity, or for the love of our gold, we feel that we would give all these for the presence of a single bosom friend. It was thus with Mr. Harwood, and the kind services of Charles Wiley were like a balm to his soul.

On the following morning, Mr. Harwood was no better. On the contrary, he was evidently growing worse. He called Charles to his bedside, and said—

"My noble friend, something tells me that I shall never recover from this illness. The wound I have received has penetrated deep, and the art of the physician is in vain. *They* have not told me so, but they know it, and so do I. I shall not live many days. But before I leave this world I would see my wife——"

"Catharine."

"Yes. You will write to her for me. You will say to her I am lying at the point of death. I would suggest that you do not inform her of your presence. If she knows your handwriting, have the letter copied. I think I may linger until she arrives, if she journeys with despatch. Think you she will come to attend me during my last moments—me, who have done her such great wrong?"

"Oh, she will come, I am sure," said Charles. "I will write to her at once. Not that I believe your forebodings are about to prove true with regard to your death; but because it is right that she should be with you during your illness."

From the day on which Charles wrote to Catharine, Mr. Harwood gradually became worse, until all hope of his recovery was at an end. Each day his anxiety to see his absent wife increased; but as day after day passed, and he saw himself sinking rapidly into the grave, he almost despaired of beholding her face again.

One morning, Mr. Harwood awoke from a sound sleep, and felt almost entirely free from pain. He knew that a change had taken place in his system, and something whispered that it was a fatal change.

"Has she not arrived yet?" he asked of Charles, who was by his side.

"Not yet," was the reply.

"Alas!" sighed Mr. Harwood, "if she come not soon it will be too late."

"She might have arrived by to-day."

At that moment the servant came to announce that a gentleman and lady, just arrived, wished to see Mr. Harwood.

"It is she!" exclaimed the dying man.

"Show them up," said Charles.

The young man stepped into an adjoining apartment, which he had occupied since he became Harwood's companion, and waited for the interview to take place.

Catharine and her father entered the room where Mr. Harwood lay.

The young wife approached his bedside, and, bending over him, whispered his name and took his hand.

"You have come at last," murmured the sick man. "I feel that an hour later would have been too late! My dear wife, I felt that I could not die without seeing you once more. I wanted to be assured that you forgave me all—all, you understand—before I died."

"I do—I do forgive you," sobbed Catharine.

"All?"

"All!"

"Oh, you are an angel!" murmured the dying man. "I have wronged you, dear Catharine, and you forgive me as *human* beings seldom forgive. May heaven pardon my crimes as freely!"

"Oh! heaven will, I am sure!"

"And I wanted to say to you," pursued Mr. Harwood, "that I account you blameless toward me; that you have acted as every pure, noble, generous woman would have acted; and to say to you, that I would be remembered as an erring and repentant brother."

Catharine made no reply, but pressed her husband's hand and bathed it with her tears.

"In my will," continued Mr. Harwood, "I have bequeathed to you all my property. I trust that it will do something toward making you happy, as it may assist you in gratifying your benevolent disposition. Another thing I would say. I would have you remember one of my friends—one whom I esteem the more highly, because I did him evil instead of good, and had no claim upon even his humanity. I was his enemy;

but when he learned that I was wounded, he came to me, administered to my wants, and became a friend indeed. He has been with me ever since—a devoted, disinterested companion. You will not forget him?"

"Oh, no!" replied Catharine—"no! What is his name?"

"A name familiar to you——"

"To me?"

"Yes. And you know him well, although you know not what a noble soul he possesses. It is Charles Wiley!"

"Charles Wiley!" echoed Catharine. "Impossible!"

"It is true," said Harwood. "He is here. He has been by my side day and night since I have lain upon this bed. Catharine, he is worthy of your love! Now I have said all I have desired to say to you, and since you forgive me I can die in peace!"

Mr. Harwood seemed to have summoned all his strength, and exhausted it in making this final effort. Catharine held his hand, and still bent over him, watching the changes of his pallid features. The father was on the opposite side of the bed, and a physician and clergyman were there. Thus attended, Mr. Harwood seemed to sink into a weary slumber, and without a struggle breathed his last.

At that moment Charles Wiley entered the room, and pressed the hand of the weeping wife over the dead body of her husband!

It is needless to prolong our narrative. After the funeral of Mr. Harwood, his widow, accompanied by her father, returned to the east, having bid an affectionate adieu to Charles Wiley, who pursued his travels toward the north.

Charles and Catharine had a long conversation in private before they parted. What that conversation was we will not attempt to say; but we may add that a year from that time, when Catharine had put off her mourning apparel, Charles returned to her, proposed, and was accepted.

In the midst of all their trials they had never ceased to love each other; yet with more than ordinary virtue, they had never allowed their love to overcome their sense of duty. And now when the ordeal was passed, and their sorrows were at an end, they became wiser, better, happier than before.

## SILENT LOVE.

BY MARY DAVENANT.

"WHAT a beautiful creature!" exclaimed Horace Hanwood, as a very lovely woman entered the assembly room. She leaned on the arm of a stately old gentleman, evidently her father, the turbaned mamma being on the other side.

"Beautiful indeed!" echoed his cousin, the handsome and fashionable Wesley Staunton, and the eyes of both the young men followed the graceful movements of the fair one as she passed onward.

The party were strangers, unknown to any of the managers who received the company, but the searching glances thrown around her by the younger lady, showed that she expected to meet at least one familiar face among the crowd. At length a beaming smile proved she had not been disappointed, and a lady highly distinguished in the world of fashion came forward to greet the strangers, and to introduce them to her party.

"Who can they be? Southerners evidently, and rich ones too, or I am much mistaken," pursued Mr. Staunton.

"For shame, Wesley," replied his cousin, "how can you think or talk of money when gazing on such loveliness? Heavens!—what a smile!"

"Ah, Monsieur le Philosophe! don't you see I am paying a great compliment to the lady's loveliness. I would hardly venture to become acquainted with a penniless lass, with that face and figure, for I should certainly fall in love with her, and then where would I be? Here, Philip," he added, seizing the arm of a manager who was hurrying by, "tell me the name of that beautiful stranger—the lady, I mean, talking to Mrs. Wilton?"

"That is Miss Clifton, from Louisiana—handsome, ain't she? Shall I introduce you?"

"Why, perhaps—tell me something about her first."

"She is, they say, a delightful person—an only daughter—the father as rich as Croesus, just come here to live."

"We must know them of course: come, Horace," and the cousins were, a moment afterward, presented in due form to the lady.

Never in his life had Horace so envied the easy assurance of Wesley's manners as at this moment. Although several other persons surrounded Miss Clifton, all desirous of gaining her attention, Mr. Staunton at once appropriated it entirely, and when the dance was called led her off to another

part of the room, leaving Horace, who was as shy and reserved as his cousin was self-confident, with the agreeable sensation of having been particularly awkward and foolish at the moment when of all others in his life he had been the most anxious to please.

"Block-head that I am!" he murmured, as he slowly followed the handsome couple, and placed himself where he could watch their movements. "What must she think of me?—to stand staring like a lowtish school-boy, while Wesley's ready tongue and nimble wit carries all before him! How handsome the fellow looks too—he is doing his best to fascinate—pity he has neither head nor heart!"

Ah, poor Horace! in this world of shams, heads and hearts like thine are sometimes sadly in our way in graver places than a ball-room.

But Horace was at this moment a little unjust toward Wesley, who had sense enough to appreciate his cousin's great superiority, and heart enough to be as fond of him as a perfectly selfish person can be of any one. Wesley's father, a wealthy merchant, had adopted his orphan nephew when a child, had educated him with his youngest son, given him a profession, that of medicine, and sent him abroad, where he had devoted himself to study, and assiduously walked the hospitals, while Wesley had worse than wasted the time the other improved. Mr. Staunton's death re-called the young men home, when Wesley found himself master of about thirty thousand dollars, and Horace of a small patrimony just sufficient to maintain him during that disheartening period when the youth of a physician is a barrier to success, which even genius seldom removes. But what genius cannot do is often accomplished by a time-serving spirit, and this had been denied to Horace. He despised the paltry tricks, and shams, and quackeries by which he saw his inferiors passing him on the road to prosperity, and with his eye steadily fixed on fame's proud eminence, determined he would gain it nobly, or nobly would remain obscure. Thus at six and twenty, though he had gained a name among men of science, Horace was just able to get along comfortably as a single man, and did not dare to hope for the realization of sundry day dreams of ideal bliss, in which few who saw his calm, prosaic exterior suspected him of indulging.

For we must acknowledge that with all his science and all his sense, our Horace had long cherished in secret some very unscientific fantasies. Then all those hidden depths of sentiment and imagination that his daily course of duty kept in such strict subjection, were suffered to flow forth, and bear him on their bosom into some realm of faery, amid beings of a higher, purer race, and scenes of happiness denied him here. And as Horace stood, solitary and abstracted in the midst of the brilliant crowd, his eye fixed on that speaking face now smiling so sweetly on Wesley, he felt as if she had been with him a denizen of that spirit land, now revealing herself to his earthly gaze to mock him with hopes that were forever unattainable.

He was roused from his reverie by Wesley grasping his arm. "What are you dreaming about, man?" he said—"come and secure Miss Clifton for a dance before she is engaged the whole evening—she has done for me completely, and I want your opinion of her. But you can't fail to think her a delicious creature; and the old man, they say, is worth half a million."

"A delicious creature! half a million!" thought Horace, as he was pulled from his empyrean heights into this mundane mire. He felt so indignant that he did not answer his cousin save by a look of contempt, which the other was too pre-occupied to see.

During his dance with Miss Clifton, poor Horace's ill fortune still pursued him. He was embarrassed, awkward, and scarcely had the use of his faculties; just too as he was beginning to recover them under the influence of the lady's irresistibly winning manners, Wesley joined them, and the expression of relief with which she turned to him from her embarrassed partner, completed his discomfiture. Still enough had passed between them to convince him that her mind was of a high order.

Indeed it is seldom that both nature and fortune combine to shower upon one individual the rare gifts they had bestowed upon Ella Clifton. Beautiful, high-born, full of talent which had been sedulously cultivated, you had but to look into the clear depths of her spiritual eyes, and to watch the movement of her perfectly formed mouth, to see that a soul of no common order dwelt in a shrine so worthy of it. Indeed it seemed as though the soul had fashioned for itself the outward temple, for her peculiar charm, that which separated her so entirely from the other beauties that surrounded her, faultless perhaps as she in form, and feature, and complexion, was something that seemed to emanate from within, impalpable, indescribable—but irresistible in its power over one capable of appreciating its mysterious loveliness.

But of all this Wesley Staunton saw nothing. To him she was beautiful, high-bred, wealthy, and as such a prize worth struggling after, but in this peculiar charm was the secret of the influence so suddenly exercised over the hitherto calm and unsusceptible Dr. Hanwood—an influence so powerful that it almost terrified him. He could not understand it. He who had always thought himself a prudent, sensible man—who had gazed unmoved upon a thousand lovely faces—who, though he admired beauty, had always deemed it a secondary thing to mind, and character, and conduct—who had determined when the right time came to select and examine, and study well the fair one to whom he resigned his heart before he gave it over to her keeping. He, to find himself so suddenly ensnared!

"It is folly, nonsense, delusion," he said, as he threw his cloak about him, and pulled his hat over his eyes on quitting the ball. "A good walk in the cold will drive it out of me—I scarcely have spoken to this girl—she is nothing to me—and yet I feel as if I had known her always, and that she must henceforth influence my destiny forever. Great powers—what madness!—and Wesley, too, so taken with her! and yet he can stay and drink, and carouse with all those men after basking in her smiles—for she did smile on him more kindly than the rest, and seemed to admire him and enjoy his nonsense. And what chance have I, poor, and ugly, and awkward as I am, beside an Apollo, an Antinous such as he?" And notwithstanding he walked out to Schuylkill on that bitter night, Horace found himself arguing this knotty question as he laid himself on his bed, and continuing it in dreams during his broken slumbers.

But no such feeling of self-mistrust crept through the excited brain of the handsome Wesley. He had left the ball late in the morning intoxicated with champagne, and with the beauty of Miss Clifton. A general favorite with women, their flatteries and his mirror, which he consulted more frequently than most of the other sex, had persuaded him that he was irresistible; and as he had determined to marry whenever he found any one handsome enough and rich enough to enable him to add to his selfish enjoyments instead of curtailing them, he was delighted to have met with a lady who so highly combined both these requisites. For Wesley Staunton disdained the idea of marrying for money alone. He could number on his fingers the unattractive heiresses who would gladly have accepted him, and with each of whom he had flirted long enough to make her miserable for a while, and to prove the truth of his assertions, while of undowered beauty he thought but to amuse the passing hour.

Though he hated study and labor of every kind,



had picked up a good deal of desultory information, and was a very pleasant companion; and as he had never been so openly dissipated as to create scandal, he was liked even by those who possessed discrimination enough to lament his want of the higher attributes that give nobility and worth to character. He, therefore, considered his success with Miss Clifton as sure, provided her affections were free, and this from certain indications he soon discovered was the case.

The Cliftons already occupied an elegant mansion, which had been prepared for them previous to their arrival, where our cousins presented themselves on the day after the ball; and where Wesley Staunton soon managed to establish himself on a most intimate footing. The heiress was evidently pleased with her fascinating admirer; and poor Horace, after a few visits which fanned his already kindled flame into an absorbing passion, saw clearly that she preferred his cousin, and felt most painfully that his own unobtrusive, but sterling merit was completely obscured amid the brilliant, social talents of the circle that surrounded her. Still like the moth about the candle, he found it impossible to avoid her presence, and he was content to sit and gaze on Ella while her father would monopolize his conversation with politics, or business, or Mrs. Clifton edified him with the domestic experiences.

But for all this, tiresome as it was, Horace would feel himself amply repaid, when, as occasionally happened, Ella would turn to him as she gave utterance to some thought or feeling above the ordinary range of conversational mediocrity, or appealed to his authority or decision on any controverted point. And this proved food enough for the hopeless passion, which, after a few vain efforts, he ceased to struggle against. He knew that she could never be his, she would marry his cousin, who, under her lovely influence, would become a wiser, better man. He might then, perchance, watch over her happiness, his secret buried in the recesses of his own bosom, with a pure and protesting love worthy of an angel.

Such was the future marked out for himself by Horace, while his cousin was happily pursuing his suit. But to the surprise of everybody, a whole year ran its round, and no engagement was announced to the expecting world of fashion, who at last decided that the couple must be privately affianced, but that the lady did not choose it should be acknowledged, lest it should deprive her of the right to make future conquests.

"Are you engaged, Wesley?" asked Horace, one day, when his cousin had been lounging a good while about his office, and seemed to have something upon his mind that he wanted to communicate, but did not know exactly how to set about it.

"No," answered Wesley, sadly, "and if a report I have heard to-day should turn out true, every thing will have to be at an end between us."

"What do you mean?" said Horace, alarmed. "Is she engaged to any one else?"

"Oh, nothing of that kind of course. But Allan last night received a letter from New Orleans, announcing the failure of a house with which Mr. Clifton was formerly connected, and for which, it is said, he is a heavy endorser—if so, he is ruined."

"Great God! how terrible!"

"Still it may not be true, or the evil may be exaggerated, so of course everything will continue as usual until I can hear more. But I now congratulate myself that Ella's foolish whims have prevented matters from being further advanced than they are."

"Wesley," asked Horace, much agitated, "do you think she loves you?"

His cousin opened his handsome eyes in astonishment, and glancing at a mirror near him, replied, "of course I think so, and she is such a pretty creature, so full of talent, and all that kind of thing, that I can't help loving her too, so it will come devilish hard upon us both—but what can we do?"

"Do?—why marry to be sure—you have thirty thousand dollars."

"Thirty thousand devils!—why I can scarce get along by myself on the paltry sum!"

"Depend upon it Ella Clifton values affection more than wealth."

"She may, but I do not. I must have both to make me happy—don't look so disgusted, Horace, and spare me the long lecture I see rising on your tongue. I know very well all that you would say to me, but I am as I was made—so keep my counsel, and say nothing of what I have told you—it may after all be a false report."

But false or true the rumor gained ground. Mr. Clifton was summoned to the south "on business," and soon after his departure, Mrs. Clifton was taken very ill. Wesley Staunton, restless, unhappy, and tossed on a sea of conflicting doubts, scarcely knew how to shape his future course. As Mrs. Clifton's illness increased, Dr. Hanwood was called upon by the experienced physicians in attendance to assist in watching her, and who can tell his feelings when he found himself thus intimately associated with her he so hopelessly and so silently adored!

At first she hardly observed his presence, for her mother was suffering violently, and her own misery seemed scarcely less. But the judicious remedies so skilfully applied by the quiet, young physician, soon wrought a soothing influence, and Ella's look of heartfelt gratitude for his success, the pressure of the hand he so long had yearned

to clasp, her whispered thanks, so soft, so earnest, nearly overpowered him.

Mrs. Clifton's illness was a protracted one, and long before its termination her husband hastened back to her—a ruined man—his whole property being but little more than sufficient to meet his obligations. Wesley Staunton's course was, therefore, resolved upon. His inquiries after the invalid had been constant, but after one or two slight efforts he had made no further attempt to see her daughter, and at last he left town. A few weeks after, a letter to Horace announced he had sailed for Europe.

Horace saw Ella felt herself deserted, for she each day grew thinner, paler, and the shadow deepened in her dark spiritual eye. He saw too how manfully she struggled against her secret sorrow, how she would strive to cheer her saddened father, to raise the drooping spirit of her suffering mother, and he did his best to aid her in these efforts of affection. His presence was evidently a support, a comfort to her, and though Wesley's name was never mentioned by either, Horace knew that he was a link that united her to the lover she had lost.

It was evening, the invalid slept, and Ella was alone in an adjoining room when Horace entered to pay his usual visit. Never in her most brilliant days had he seen her so touchingly lovely as now, never had he found it so difficult to control his feelings, never did he curse more bitterly the poverty that chained him, hand and foot, and prevented his making a single effort to gain her love.

For the first time, Ella spoke to him of her father's fallen fortunes. "For myself," she said, "the loss of wealth is nothing. We have still enough for comfort, and heaven has kindly spared me all that gives to my life its real value."

"All, Miss Clifton," Horace could not help exclaiming.

She raised her beautiful eyes to his as if surprised, and answered, "yes, all—have I not still my parents, my friends—yourself?" she added, softly.

This was too much for Horace, he forgot poverty, pride, her love for Wesley, everything but his own absorbing passion, as he wildly exclaimed—

"Ella!—angel! so long, so hopelessly adored—can you have read my heart?"

Her lovely face was buried in her hands—next moment she clasped them together, and looking up said—

"God only knows how I have longed to do so—but you have kept it hidden from me, and I have suffered, Horace—ah, how keenly!"

But all suffering was forgotten in the joy that followed, when close to that noble heart, its inmost secrets were laid bare before her, and she in her turn confessed that though at first attracted by his cousin's brilliant exterior, she soon had recognized in himself a spirit kindred to her own.

"But Wesley told me you were cold," she said—"that you despised our foolish sex, and wrapt in your own high speculations laughed at love. He asked my hand, but was rejected, he persisted in his devotion, evidently thinking it impossible I was serious in my refusal. I saw that he cared little for me, that my fortune was his aim—but he brought you often with him to our house, and I thanked and blessed him for it. I sought society, for I found you there: every where the voice of flattery reached me, but I did not heed it, for yours was silent. Still I saw you, and was happy, I felt that you valued me for something the rest did not discern, and often, guarded as you were, a word or look escaped you that bade me hope I might yet be loved. For oh, Horace!" she added, "my earliest dreams had been of a love higher, nobler, purer, than any I had yet inspired, and something seemed to whisper to me that in your heart was its home!"

My romantic reader!—do you believe in the elective affinities?—for my hero did as devoutly as the immortal Goethe—and had he not good reason? With such love as this, poverty, pain, privation are willingly endured, and Horace now felt that he could defy them all. Destiny had, however, better things in store for him, for he had not been a month engaged before an old bachelor brother of Mr. Clifton's died, leaving to him and to his lovely daughter his immense wealth.

Nothing, therefore, prevented the speedy union of the lovers, and now that fortune smiles upon him, Dr. Hanwood is amazed to find how rapidly his practice is extending. His happiness increased his confidence in himself, but his money has gained him the confidence of the public which they would not accord to his merit.

Wesley Staunton was confounded when he heard of Ella's accession to fortune, for to this hour he believes she always intended to marry him. He is again fluttering round a handsome heiress, but she seems a little mistrustful of him. Still he is confident of success; and Ella can often scarcely forbear a smile when lounging at his ease in her handsome drawing-room, he confides to her his love, his hopes and plans.

"Wesley talks so much about his feelings," she said to her husband, after one of these *tete-a-tetes*, "that I never can believe them genuine. I would put more faith in a SILENT LOVE."

## THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

BY MRS. S. S. NICHOLSON.

In the garret of a lonely house, in the suburbs of one of our western cities, lay a poor woman in the agonies of death. Beside her bed, on either side, knelt her two weeping children. During a brief interval of ease, the mother feebly breathed their names, and instantly they bent over her to catch her dying words. "Anna, my daughter, a few short moments more and your young brother will have no earthly friend but you. Will you, my dear, be to him a faithful sister?" The sweet girl's eyes filled, and her frame trembled, while the painful words were pronounced, but with a fortitude uncommon in one of her years, she forced back the tears, and hiding her emotion by pressing her lips to the beloved parent's cheek, murmured—"I will."

"And you, Willy," she continued, laying her hand upon the head of the boy whose face was buried in her bosom, "will you try to be a good boy and mind your sister? She is but little more than three years older than yourself, but she has learned much in the school of adversity, and I know, my boy, she will be a safe guide for you, as far as her knowledge goes; and when that fails, she has a Father in heaven, whom she acknowledges, and to whom she can always go when in doubt. Will you promise to do as she wishes?"

Willy raised his face, streaming with tears, one moment; then in vain to speak, bowed his head in token of assent, and then gave way afresh to his grief. Oh! how the heart of that mother yearned over her boy, and, for a moment, she wished she might be spared to struggle for him a few more years. But the hope of the Christian was strong within her, and putting her arm affectionately around his neck, while the other hand clasped that of her agitated daughter, she calmly said, "weep not, dear children; the Lord will raise you up friends. He is the father of the fatherless; trust in Him. Though this dispensation is grievous for the time, yet remember, whom He loveth He chasteneth. Always keep in mind that His eye is upon you, and that if you try to do right, He will aid you. Your father, while alive, shielded you from every grief, but the Lord had need of him; yet his example is left you. Be honest and virtuous as he was, and you cannot fail to be happy hereafter. He who 'doeth all things well' is about to afflict you again—but be faithful and believing, and all

things will work together for your good." Exhausted, she paused, and a strange expression passed over her countenance; her breath grew short. Stretching out her arms, she cried, "death is at the door! dear ones, my sight is dim—let me embrace you—God bless and keep —" The arms fell lifeless from about them, the words died upon her lips, and the spirit, tried in the furnace of affliction, was in the presence of its God.

It is the evening after the funeral: the moon shines brightly into that desolate chamber, revealing a holy and beautiful scene, that of a sister's love. Anna Somers sits near the window. The head of the poor stricken boy rests in her lap, and a smile of joy illumines her countenance when smoothing back the hair from his brow, she finds that sleep has stolen upon his weary eyelids. Carefully she raises his slender frame in her arms and lays him upon his bed, then seating herself beside him, she seems lost for many moments in deep thought. "Yes," she at length exclaims, aloud, "I must begin to-morrow! I will go out and try to get work, for poor Willy must remain at school. Dear boy," she cried, pressing her lips upon his now placid brow, "he must never suffer."

A wearisome day it was to poor Anna, while she walked from square to square, stopping ever and anon at some noble-looking mansion, seeking employment. Some received her kindly, and not only patronized her themselves, but promised to interest their friends in her behalf; while others (shame on such inhuman hearts) wounded her sensitive nature by the coldness of their bearing, and even by attempts to beat down her price a few shillings, alledging that so young a girl could not possibly earn as much as a woman. But among all, Anna contrived to find the means of subsistence for many months. At the end of that time, however, she found her constitution so much impaired that it would be necessary to pursue a more active life; yet she dreaded to separate from her brother. But finally it was decided that she should seek employment as housemaid, while Willy was to give up his school, and try to get in as errand boy for some thriving establishment. They would thus both earn enough to procure clothing, and each would be provided with a home.

Let us look in again upon our young friend Anna. She has now been about six weeks in her

new home, and surely by this time knows how she likes it. Her work is finished for the day, and she is seated in her own little room, away up in the fourth story, scribbling a few lines in her diary. By the way, what a treasure such an article is to the lonely and desolate! Reader, are you one who has no friend to whom you can pour out your soul, no human being who can appreciate and sympathize with you? Try for yourself; keep a diary of all your thoughts and feelings. You will find it a source of solid comfort. But let us take a peep as she writes.

"To-day I am very tired; how weak and faint I feel! And yet very little has been accomplished; I know I could have done all easily if I had been allowed to regulate my work, or even if there had been order in its arrangement, but where there are so many to command, what can a poor girl do! There certainly is great want of system in this family, for I am never allowed to finish one thing before I am called off to a second, and then blamed because I did not do the first in time. For instance, this morning, the old lady told me to put the bread in pans quickly, as it was almost running over. I hastened to prepare the dishes, and had just got my hands nice and clean, when one of the daughters desired me to run down cellar for some wood for her; I pointed to the bread, but she said I would soon be back. Hardly had I returned to the kitchen when another requested me to run across the street and get her a skein of silk. This done, I was about to commence, when another called, 'Anna! Anna!' and away I was sent to the third story after a book. At last I began to wash my hands a second time, when the old lady entered and exclaimed at my idleness. The bread had run over on to the floor, so I had to listen to a tirade against hired girls, and the waste they made. I undertook to tell her I had been sent of errands, but she gave me to understand that she did not like servants to answer. They mean to be kind, but they are all destitute of order, and think a girl never can be tired. Ah, me! I must seek another place. I love little children; I wonder how I should do for a child's nurse? I will advertise."

And she did advertise; and very soon was answered by a request to call at No. 4 Elm street; at three o'clock on Wednesday. Having obtained leave of absence for an hour, she went with a beating heart to see the mistress of the house designated. Her hand trembled as she rang the bell, but she felt quite re-assured when a neatly dressed maid-servant opened the door, and after answering her inquiry as to whether Mrs. West lived there, asked "if she was the nurse girl?" There was a kind look about her that made her feel at ease. She followed her into a sitting-room, where everything was arranged in such

tasteful simplicity, that she knew at once it was with one of refined manners she would have to deal. Nor was she surprised when a gentle looking lady entered with a babe in her arms, and asked her in a sweet voice, "if she was the girl who advertised?"

"You look hardly strong enough to handle such a boy as this," she said, as she placed on her lap a plump, black eyed little fellow of eight months old. "Let me see if you can lift him easily."

He was a sweet little fellow, and Anna first gave him a hug and a kiss, and then playfully tossed him up a few times; but it made her arms ache, so she placed him on her knee, saying, "she was not used to holding children, but she thought she should soon get accustomed to it." After a few questions relative to her health, and present situation, it was agreed that she should commence her duties the next week.

Weeks passed, months rolled away, and Anna's step grew lighter, and her face looked joyous, for peace was in her heart. Her mistress was so thoughtful in everything, and often would not let her carry the babe half as much as she wished, but told her to amuse him on the floor, alledging it was better for his health, but Anna knew that it was frequently done out of consideration for her. Then, too, she would often bring her work and sit in the nursery for a few hours, talking with her of her mother and brother, and showing her how to alter some of Mr. West's cast-off garments for Willy. Oh, how Anna loved her! Willy was now learning a trade with an honest carpenter, who, though very strict during work hours, was a well meaning man, and she knew he was in good hands. Every Sunday afternoon he spent with her, and many were the happy hours she and he passed with the pet Charley.

At length the warm summer months began to come on, and Mrs. West prepared to visit her mother, who lived a few miles in the country; Anna of course accompanied her, and now commenced her Elysian days. Charley was old enough to run about, so she used to wander away into the woods with him, and hours would pass like minutes while they sought the wild flowers, chased the butterflies, or seated on a log in some shady nook, the one told over, while the other listened to, the little infant stories, so captivating in childish days. Often the little one fell asleep, for the sweet tones of his nurse's voice were like soft music to his baby ear. Then Anna would gently lift him in her arms and bear him to the house.

Three years passed away, and Charley no longer needed any other nurse than his mother; and now Anna's heart often ached at the thought of leaving this dear home and her young charge.

She had been so very happy there, that she dreaded to go out again among strangers to look for a new place; yet she comforted herself with the reflection that her mistress had promised to assist her in selecting another home, and she knew she would not turn her off till a suitable protection had been found. Still sometimes sad forebodings would come over her, and she would seek her little chamber and pour out her soul to the Friend who seeth in secret, and to whose watchful care she attributed all the good that had fallen to her lot. Sometimes a flood of tears would come, but they served as a relief. Oh! what a comfort there is in a good, hearty cry sometimes! It was after one of these sudden gusts that her mistress entered her room.

"Why, Anna, I have sought you everywhere; not crying, I hope—naughty child! come, cheer up, I think I have good news for you. A few days since, I wrote to a friend about you, and here is her answer: hear what she says. 'I have known Anna so long that I needed not your praises to feel her virtues; she is just such an one as we need. For several years, you know, my husband's eyesight has unfitted him for reading by candle-light, and I have heretofore been eyes for him, but, of late, I too have been obliged to give it up: our evenings, therefore, are very dull. Now Anna, with her soft voice and quiet ways, will just suit us. We want her as a kind of overseer, to look after our girl in the kitchen, and keep things in order; in fact to be to us as a daughter. If she will come on such terms, say we shall be glad to see her, and will send for herself and baggage as soon as she likes.' And now," continued Mrs. West, "can you guess who these nice old people are?"

"Yes, indeed! your parents. Am I not right?"

"You are. Will you go?"

"Oh, yes, madam, for it will be almost like being with you. Every summer, I suppose, I shall see you and Charley there?"

"Yes, every summer you may look for us. You will perhaps be lonesome without Willy, but you must run round and persuade Mr. Morton to let him spend his Sundays out there. You will not have very hard work, I imagine, for the old gentleman always looks smiling when he sees you, and his wife said to me, the other day, 'that you were one of the dearest and most loveable girls she ever saw.' Perhaps some one else in the family thinks so too! There! don't blush so; Robert Morton is a very fine young man, and if he has not asked you yet, no doubt will. But I won't tease you, but leave you to get ready while I write to ma. When shall I say you will come?"

"On the third day from this, for I want to spend one more Sabbath with Willy."

The day of departure came, the good-byes were

spoken, Charley had his last half dozen kisses—and Anna was gone. Weeks and months fled by in the new country home, and she became as a dear child to Mr. and Mrs. Warren. Willy walked out every Sabbath afternoon, and Robert's chaise was always seen at the door, ready to convey him back to town. One day Anna told her brother she had a secret for his ear.

"You know," she said, "Mr. Warren is quite a phrenologist? Well, soon after I came here, he said to me, 'my good girl you would make a fine musician; I see it in your head. Would you like to learn?' I told him I had always desired it, but thought it out of my power, and above my station. 'Pshaw,' he cried, 'your station! Don't I call you my daughter now? There's that fine piano shut from one year's end to another, except when daughter West comes, and there is plenty of music. I can teach you about the notes, time, &c., so you must begin to-morrow. My old lady and I often pine to hear some of the old-fashioned songs.' And I did begin, Willy, and am quite a good player now. He has also taught me drawing, for you know he is a man of splendid education. He instructs me in other things when I have leisure, for he says I must be a teacher when they are gone. Had our dear father lived we too would have been differently situated! But now I am satisfied that the way is opened for me. You too, brother, ought to improve every moment."

"Oh! I do. Robert teaches me in the evening, and he says, 'I learn very fast;' you know he is a great student. He often takes me to lectures too."

"Well, Willy, don't tell any one at Mr. Morton's that I have learned music and drawing, for they might think me getting proud, and I would not lose the good opinion of the old people."

"And Robert?"

"Oh! Robert's nothing to me—but be sure not to tell him."

Things went on in the old way, with very little variation, till at last one Sunday had nearly passed away, and Willy had not made his accustomed visit. Anna felt very uneasy; she feared sickness had prevented him: it was, therefore, with a thankful heart she at length espied Robert fastening his horse to the gate-post. Running quickly out, she eagerly asked for her brother.

"Oh, Willy is well enough," I replied, "but I told him it was too dusty for him to come out this afternoon, and he thought it not worth while to ride out with me for so short a time. Are not these good reasons?" Anna looked hurt and disappointed. "Please get your bonnet, Miss Anna, and take a little walk to pay me for coming so far, and I'll tell you a better and truer one."

She had become so used to his joking way that she immediately complied, telling him, however,

that he merited a scolding instead of a reward. As they walked along, she thought Robert very quiet and serious, and feared he had not told the truth about her brother, but in the midst of her sad thoughts he suddenly caught her hand and said earnestly—

"You must have seen, dear girl, that I loved you, and I have believed that I was not disagreeable to you. Was I mistaken? Or will you not forgive my heedless way of opening the subject? Tell me, Anna, will you take me, thoughtless as I am?"

But Anna could not speak; her eyes were cast down, and it seemed to her that leaden weights were on them, so impossible was it to move. Robert felt that she did not draw away from him, so he took courage.

"You do not answer, am I to understand that I am offensive to you?" No answer came, but he thought she leaned a little toward him. "Anna, if you love me, place your hand in mine." Instantly the little palm was pressed to his. "And you will be my wife?" he cried, as he drew her to his side.

"Yes," came quickly and firmly from her lips, for she felt calmer now, and in a moment Robert, in ecstasy, was snatching kiss after kiss till she struggled to be free, telling him she believed he was beside himself.

"And you will forgive me for not bringing Willy to share our *tete-a-tete*?"

She only smiled very sweetly, as she placed her arm in his, saying, "let him come soon."

Robert was full of business: he had been for some time building a new house, and his companions had often asked him slyly, "if it was to rent?" Now, he frankly told them it was to be his own home, and all guessed very easily who was to be its mistress. Anna too found plenty to do in her spare moments, but she forgot her fatigue when evening came, and she could sit down beside Robert talking of the future. One evening, while thus engaged, she suddenly said,

"Anna you lack only two things; if you under-

stood music and painting, I should call you perfect."

"Why, Robert, I suppose you would think it foolish in me to wish to learn."

"No, indeed, they are accomplishments that always render home attractive, and when women do not neglect the more useful branches to obtain them, are invaluable. But never mind, I am resolved you shall have teachers when we are married, for I do long to hear you warbling some sweet tunes I know."

"Just let me seat myself at that piano," exclaimed Anna, "and let you see how I would look at such work. Here is a song called 'Bonnie Doon,' imagine you hear me sing it." And suddenly skimming through the prelude, she broke out in such sweetly pathetic tones, that her lover, astonished and enraptured, stood as if spell-bound. But when she had ceased, he caught her in his arms, telling her "he felt sure he was the happiest man living." But Anna slipped away and running from the room, quickly returned with a portfolio, saying, as she placed it on his knee, "I may show them now, since I no longer fear to offend you. Look at them; they are all mine." And opening it, he found it filled with spirited drawings, some copies from well selected scenery, and others sketches from nature. "Now, sir," she said, laughing merrily, "I suppose I am perfect?"

"Oh!" cried Robert, "you cannot tell how much you have added to my cup of joy! You are a worker of miracles; who would have thought you could be so secret! Yes, in my eyes, you are indeed a perfect woman."

The Warrens, though they regretted parting with their adopted daughter, could not help rejoicing that her virtues had gained her a husband in a young man so prosperous in this world, and of such unblemished character. Their farm and dairy supplied the larder, and their good wishes made the hearts of the young people glow with deep affection in return. The wedding took place at Mr. Warren's, Mr. Morton's and Mr. West's families being present.

## THE DIVORCE.

BY ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

## CHAPTER I.

It was in a remote district in France, a district sparsely inhabited, dense with forests, and bearing in all its rude features traces of the feudal power which was yet strong in the land. In the most picturesque portion of this district stood an old castle scarred by war sieges, heavy with the imposing grandeur of many centuries, and bearing traces within and without of a lofty race that had been lords of the district long before the most ancient of those gnarled forest trees was rooted. One after another, generation following generation, had the lords of that proud family been carried through those massive portals, to sleep in the chapel that stood shrouded in its mantle of dark ivy far down the eminence, from which the castle, in dark and gothic grandeur, loomed against the sky. A hamlet lay embosomed in the forest some miles beyond the castle, and near that stood, amid smiling meadows and pasture land, a fine old convent, endowed by the first lords of Gronnoud, and now one of the most thriving religious houses in France. Some daughter of that proud race had ever been the presiding abbess of this retreat. The religious house—the chapel with its tomb crowded full of haughty dust—the towers and turrets of the castle, all were alike features of the great family pride that held in its grasp the past with its proud array of warriors; and the present, with its accumulated honors, its army of vassals, its vast wealth stretching from horizon to horizon. Its political power felt even at the distant court, never in all its history had that lordly domain been so full of haughty strength, and yet from all the heap of confined pride hoarded beneath that chapel, two male representatives alone survived.

They stood together, the Count Gronnoud and his son, upon the battlements of their feudal house. Fifty hamlets, and four strong holds scarcely less imposing than the pile upon which they stood, lay between them and the horizon. This little world, bounded only by the clouds of heaven, with all its grandeur, all its teeming life, was theirs; or *his* rather, for that lofty old count, with his eagle eyes and haughty bearing, was the free lord of all. His ancestors for two hundred years had rendered no homage for their land.

The king himself would not have been master in the castle which a Gronnoud claimed as his inheritance. Free to possess and free to give was that stately old count. At any moment he could disinherit the pale and slender young man at his side. No vassal in all the domain that lay at their feet was more entirely in the power of that old man than the son who stood by his side.

The Count De Gronnoud held a roll of parchment in his hand, the seal was broken, a thread of crimson floss lay upon the stone pavement at his feet. He clutched the parchment in one hand, and his eyes were bent sternly on his son.

"Ha! what is this, do'st thou hesitate and turn white? By the rood, this is a strange reception of news that should send all the young blood tingling to thy heart; I tell thee, Lady Eleanor will be here, with her noble sire, before the month ends, and so the blood leaves thy cheek, and there is a coward look in those eyes. Is this the way in which a bridegroom meets the lady of his love? Shame, boy, it is not thus the counts of Gronnoud have received the mothers of our race.

"Father, father, spare me!" faltered the young man, casting himself at the count's feet, "I cannot wed this lady?"

"Cannot wed this lady, art thou mad?" thundered the old man; "get up, sir, and say what evil fiend possesses thee—up, I say, and prepare to receive this lady as becomes thy father's son!"

Ernest arose and stood before his father with downcast eyes and a cheek of marble; you could see that his limbs shook, but the expression of his features was resolute, nay, stern.

"Father, I cannot wed this lady; I am already the husband of another!"

It was the old man's turn now. His cheek and mouth grew pale; his nostrils dilated; his proud, Roman nose seemed to arch itself, he looked like an eagle stooping to his prey. He spoke, and the mighty passion aroused within him thrilled through the forced calmness of his voice.

"Speak again, I did not hear aright!"

"Why should I speak again, you *have* heard aright, father, the passion in your voice proves it?"

For a minute—and that minute seemed an hour to the young man—the Count Gronnoud stood

tionless, the rage in his heart was too mighty for words, but his iron will made itself felt more forcibly in this strange silence.

"Who?" he demanded, at last—"who is the woman?"

Ernest waved his hand toward a cluster of houses that lay at their feet to the left. Far apart from these a rude stone dwelling, more spacious than the rest, and having some claim to architectural elegance, could be easily distinguished. That dwelling with a hyde of land had been the gift of a former De Gronnoud to one of his captains for bravery in battle.

"Forgive us!" said the young man, when he saw from the glance of his father's eye that his gesture was understood—"her father saved your life."

The old count stamped fiercely upon the battlement.

"What ho, will no one come hither?" he shouted, with a cry like that of a wounded battle-horse.

Half a dozen armed men rushed toward him from various points of the battlement.

The men looked at each other aghast. Ernest turned away from his father, and prepared to follow them. He cast one appealing glance upon that haughty face, it was locked and rigid with some stern resolve. The old count was gazing upon the stone house in the valley, he did not seem conscious when his son left the battlement. Thus he stood mute with passion, all his faculties centred in one train of thought for at least fifteen minutes, then he gathered the velvet folds of his cloak about him, and strode away. He called neither for horse nor attendant, but crossed the drawbridge with a stern and rapid tread. He descended the hill, and, for the first time, perhaps, in his life, entered the little hamlet that lay nearest the castle, alone and without any sign of his high rank, save the costliness of his garments, and the air of indomitable pride which broke forth in every look and gesture. The stone dwelling which his son had pointed out stood far apart from the meaner habitations, one end and half its roof was overrun with ivy, and a clump of forest oaks rose at the back, sheltering thickets of flowering shrubs, and a little nook of wild blossoms that had been transplanted from the forest. The old count saw nothing of this, his eyes were bent upon an open casement, from which the ivy was with difficulty crowded back to make room for a creeping, forest vine, full of delicate blossoms, that hung around the casement in a wreath that seemed like a ripple of light flung against the ivy.

Within this casement sat a young girl, bending over an embroidery-frame. Now and then she raised her head, shook back the golden ringlets

that became troublesome in her stooping position, and leaned over with a bird-like chirp as if caressing something at her feet.

This sight only made the old count move faster toward the house; unseen and unannounced he opened the outer door, and strode into the room where the young creature was sitting.

What passed between the haughty noble and the fair girl who stood up to receive him, pale with affright, no one can tell, but his voice rose high more than once during that momentous half hour, and the wild, sweet agony of her pleading was again and again broken by the unheeded wail of an infant. At last the door opened, revealing the old noble, in his iron pride, turning from his son's wife. She had taken up her child from where it had been lying at her feet, and as if borne down by the weight of his denunciation, had sunk cowering upon the cushion, holding the baby close to her bosom, and striving to veil it from the proud grandsire's wrath with the golden fall of her hair.

"Let me hear it from his own lips; mercy—oh! have mercy!"

"Never shall he breathe the air of heaven again till the dispensation arrives!—never till he comes forth to wed the lady of his father's choice," answered the stern man.

"But my child—his child."

"That shall be cared for. To-morrow you will be ready to give it up."

"What, give up my child, my pretty, pretty daughter? ah, sir, you will not do this." She flung back the ringlets from her face, revealing her pale lips quivering with anguish; her blue eyes full of wild terror and swimming in tears; her white arms straining the child to her bosom. That face, that drooping form might have won a fiend to pity, but the proud spirit in that old noble's bosom was not one to yield anything to grief or to youthful beauty. He only answered—

"I have spoken my will!" and went forth proud and untouched to express that will elsewhere.

That night a message left the castle, being a missive to the Pope of Rome; that night also the young mother fled with her child. She had neither father, mother, nor kinfolk to mourn her loss; so when the old house, which her ancestor had won by his prowess, was left vacant, no one regarded it, for Rosalia belonged to no class; her birth as a knight's daughter, her education in the convent close by, lifted her above the surfs and common people of the hamlet, while it left her far beneath the inmates of the castle. Her dwelling was isolated, friends she had none, save the inmates of the convent, and an old woman who had been her nurse. This woman fled with her mistress. The old count smiled grimly when he heard of this, and muttered to himself—"they



will perish in the forests, thus no one need learn the stain upon our house."

Months went by, and then the Castle De Gronnoud became a scene of gay festivities; hawking and hunting parties issued daily from the scarcely raised drawbridge; lights flamed from turret and keep; the sound of harp, and lute, and gleeful young voices filled those massy old walls with cheerful sounds. De Gronnoud the younger was free once more; his black horse might ever be seen by the graceful white Jeanette, which bore the lady guest whose presence had brought so much sunshine to the castle. His hand was upon her bridle-rein when she rode forth; his arms supported her haughty loveliness when she dismounted from her horse. But it was mechanical attendance, grave, courteous, and so respectful that even the most exacting woman on earth could require no more in words, though a loving heart would have pined to death on homage that had so much form and so little feeling. People looked upon the pale, sad brow of the man who was so soon to become the husband of so much beauty, and marveled at the change that had come upon him. A vague rumor that he had braved the displeasure of the proud old count in some way had got abroad, but all appeared well between them then. But in all this whirl of gaiety the young man seemed like one walking at a funeral. One day there came a courier from Rome, jaded and travel-worn, for his errand had admitted no rest on the way. A scroll of parchment, a private letter, and other friendly tokens were laid before the old count, who retired to his closet to peruse them. He spoke to no one of their contents, for his guests were ignorant that a divorce was necessary before the heir of his domain could wed the lady who even now deemed herself mistress of the castle.

When the documents had been scanned over and again, the old count sent for his son. The young man entered his father's closet, the huge door shut him in, and no sound of what passed during that interview was ever heard; but when Ernest came forth an hour after, there was a look of such profound misery upon his face, that even the servants gazed at him with commiseration as he moved along the dim galleries toward his own room.

Ernest and the Lady Eleanor were married that night in the chapel below the castle walls. It was a beautiful sight, that gay throng pouring down the winding road which led from the portcullis to the house of God. The gleam of white veils; the flash of jewels; the sweep of silken garments, and the proud sway of a hundred snowy plumes, looked dream-like and beautiful in the moonbeams that fell over castle, church, and hamlet. It was a noble sight when they

gathered within the holy walls of the chapel, lighted by a thousand tapers, hung with cloth of silver, and, the floor around the altar, carpeted deep with flowers. Amid all the glittering crowd there was no one to observe a slender form muffled in a cloak and hood, that was hovering near the porch as the wedding party came up. Back against the dark ivy the form pressed itself, gathering the thick tendrils over her with trembling haste, and looking through, oh! with eager and wild agony. First came the bride in all the proud array of her young beauty. Her wedding garments of white damask rustled as she walked; the jewels in her hair sparkled in the flood of light that came pouring through the chapel door; a smile lay upon her lips, and she swept toward the altar with the tread of an empress. What a contrast to all this was the bridegroom. His garments like hers were resplendent with jewels. His port was naturally proud as hers, but when the light fell on his face it seemed glancing upon marble—marble that possessed the power of suffering, and in all things else was stone.

The poor creature cowering behind the ivy saw all this, and a smothered groan broke through the dusk leaves. After that no sound betrayed the presence of life beneath the pendant vines, till a gush of music swelled out upon the soft night air. It was the marriage anthem. Then came wild sobs from beneath the shaking foliage—sobs that seemed like the first faint wail of a mustering storm. The ivy was dashed aside, and once more the wronged wife fled.

For weeks Rosalia had been concealed in the forest at a woodman's hut, but goaded with anxiety, wild with a craving desire to learn something of the man for whom she had suffered so much, she ventured back to her old home. Stealing from its shelter in the night she wandered forth, hoping to meet some dependant or villager who could give her news from the castle.

She had reached the chapel, and lingered near it with that entralling sensation which makes us love every object connected with the happiness that has become a memory, when a burst of music and flashes of light come from the castle. She looked up, and there, winding down toward the chapel, came the procession which we have just described.

He had deserted her then! At his father's command he had consented to wed another. The dispensation had been obtained—she, her child, were nothing—worse than nothing to him. It was these thoughts that wrung the groan of agony from her young heart when the wedding anthem swelled around her. It seemed as if a crowd of angels were warning her away from the spot where she had been sacrificed.

Rosalia went home—if that desolate and dreary house could yet be called her home. In the wild agony that sprung from the scene she had witnessed everything was forgotten; her fear of the old count, her terror lest he might learn that she had returned, and force her to give up the child. She entered the room where she had been sitting when the old count came to crush her with his proud power. A single taper burned on the hearth; and on the cushions of a great oaken chair, in one corner of the room, lay her infant sleeping softly beneath the mantle that she had folded over it before going out.

When Rosalia saw her child so still and smiling in its rosy sleep, she clasped her hands and flung them over her head with a gesture of wild sorrow, pathetic beyond my powers of description. Then moving toward the chair, she drew the mantle over her infant's face, and, seating herself on the floor, buried her forehead in the folds of her dress.

Rosalia had forgotten all precaution; the casement was open, and the night wind stole through it flaring the solitary taper, and sometimes sweeping the disheveled tresses which fell around her shoulders over the sleeping child.

All at once Rosalia started to her feet, and flinging back the hair from her temples with both hands, held her breath to listen. Something was moving around the house, a slow footstep as of one who had stolen forth to muse in the night solitude. To another the sound might have seemed nothing more than this, but to that young creature who stood listening with suspended breath and parted lips, there was enough in that faint sound to make the blood leap through every vein. You might have heard her heart beat in any corner of the room. Her eyes were bent on the open casement; the leaves were trembling all around it, and clusters of blossoms quivered in the waving light shed through them by the taper. She still gazed and listened, the footsteps drew near and nearer, a shadow fell athwart the moonlight; a man's shadow, and then she saw a face formed in the lattice. She moved forward gently, extending her hands as she went; no smile was on her lip; not a gleam of joy in her eyes; the tension upon her nerves had been too strong for sudden relaxation: but reaching the lattice she leaned against the frame, gazing upward into the eyes that had followed her all the time.

"Ernest—Ernest!"

"Rosalia!" The name burst from his lips as if all the waters of a tortured heart had rushed upward in one fierce surge. The face fell upon her shoulder, and sobs, such as shake a strong heart in its sorrow, filled the room. "Rosalia—Rosalia, you are no longer my wife!"

"I know it—I know it!"

"She is waiting for me up yonder—look how they have illuminated the castle—hear how the townsmen shout—their torches redden the trees—there is a brave light streaming from the bridal chamber. Rosalia, are you cursing me in your heart?"

"No, I cannot curse you—I am weak—I am heart struck, that is all, Ernest!"

"That is all. She is heart struck, she is weak—that is all—that is all!" He held her head back between both his hands and kissed her forehead. The touch of his lips made her shudder all over: pain and the most exquisite joy blended in that shudder. Both these sensations filled her pure heart with terror. For the first time in her life she was afraid of him.

"You shrink from me—you would tear yourself from my arms," he said, putting her back, and peeping through the casement.

"Why did you seek me?—why come hither?" cried the poor girl, supporting herself by a chair.

"I did not know that you were here—they told me you had been persuaded to give me up—that you had gone away with our child to secrete yourself from my search. I expected to find the old house empty, dark as it has been for months."

"And you came here—you still loved the old house?"

"As the bird loves the nest that it has slept in, but it was empty, dark, deserted, the nest where I had left my mate and her little one; oh! Rosalia, who was it frightened you away? It was false that my father's gold bribed you—I look in your face and know that it was false!"

"And did they tell you this? Did he, your proud father, utter a falsehood so monstrous?"

"He told me so with his own lips!"

"And you believed him?"

"No, I did not believe him. He told me to come hither and be convinced; I came and found the house dark."

"And then you believed him?" said the young mother, in her low, sad voice.

"I was mad—I was not myself—they goaded me on—they—no, no, I did not believe him, Rosalia; but what of that? his words left a doubt—I obeyed him. Do you know what has happened?—do you know what I am?"

"Yes, I was there—I saw it all—I was at the chapel."

"Yes, I felt it—not within the chapel, but near the entrance; I did not see you, Rosalia, but the ivy shivered as we went in, I felt your presence. Up to that moment my heart had been cold as stone; my veins were full of ice. As my foot touched the threshold, a shower of dew from heaven itself seemed to fall into my heart. I felt, Rosalia, as if your breath were upon my lips, filling my eyes with mist, my bosom with

tears. *I felt your presence, Rosalia, it fettered my soul at the altar, it wandered about me like a spirit. It was in the light, in the music, in the moonbeams. It drove me from the revel—from the chamber they had decked, and lured me here in the stillness—in the calm night to your feet, Rosalia, my wife—my wife!*"

He would have taken her in his arms—he would have buried her face in his bosom, she drew back gently, but with firmness. Though her lips quivered, she forced back the tears that were mustering at her heart. It was marvelous to see a young creature so troubled, and yet so firm.

"No, Ernest, I am not your wife—your own lips have said it—God's Vice Regent on earth has said it. I am not your wife; holy mother, shield me!—I am not your wife!"

She fell upon her knees as she spoke, and clasping her white palms together, held them up to a picture of the Virgin that hung upon the wall.

He approached, and circling her waist with his arm, lifted her from the floor. "Look into my face, Rosalia; not there—not there!"

She looked into his face steadily, mournfully.

"Do you hate me, Rosalia?"

"No. Oh! how can you ask it?"

"Do you love me?"

"A few hours since it would have been no sin, then I should have said yes!"

"But now?"

"An earthquake has passed over my heart, but there was one image which it could not shake down!"

He held her closely in his arms, she struggled to free herself, but it was like a flower wrestling with the tempest.

"Rosalia, we have sworn before God's altar to love one another!"

"I know it!"

"Unto death!"

"Yes, unto death!"

"And this vow, you will keep it, my wife?"

"I will keep it even to the end," answered the sweet, mournful voice from his bosom.

She had no power to move in those strong arms, but her eyes were turned upon the Virgin: some inward prayer deeper than her words spoke in those meek eyes.

He bent down and kissed her forehead and her lips. "He may render me an outcast, stain my escutcheon, proclaim me false knight to the ends of the earth. He may imprison me, for this has been, and may be, but I will never leave you again, Rosalia!"

She put away his arms and stood up, pale, sad, and oh! how beautiful.

"Ernest, remember the mother of God looks upon us."

"I will acknowledge no other wife, though all the saints in heaven look frowningly upon me."

"Before them are registered the vows you have made this evening!"

"They were false vows—I love her not—I never can love her!"

Rosalia lifted her eyes to the Virgin: her pale lips moved; shadows of deep and painful thought fitted over her white face. Those eyes so full of heavenly tenderness; those soft golden curls falling back from the upturned brow. It was the face of an angel bathed in the troubled waters of humanity.

She turned at length and took his hand between both of hers. Her lips trembled; her face was bloodless: she pointed with her finger toward the castle, which, with its blaze of light and its banners sweeping into the moonbeams, could be seen from the open casement.

"Return," she said, "your honor as a knight—your faith as a gentleman—your vow to God, all are pledged to the lady who waits up yonder. She may not—oh! mother of heaven, she cannot love you as I have done, but—" The noble creature faltered, her frame trembled from head to foot: she could not force the word from her heart which would command him from her presence. His eyes were bent upon her, he had turned his back to the castle with a resolute air.

"Go," she said, in a deep, steady voice—"go now while we have strength to part!"

He was about to speak, but the tramp of many feet drawing near checked the words upon his lip.

"They are looking for me: let them come," he said, with a mocking smile, but still there was indecision in his manner, that characteristic wont of firmness that had so nearly worked his ruin.

"Not here—not here should they find you!" said Rosalia, attempting to draw him away. "It is his—it is your father's voice!"

He yielded to her feeble violence, and was drawn into another room, from which a door opened to the forest.

## CHAPTER II.

It was long after midnight. The burst of clarion notes, ringing laughter, and shouts followed by rich wine, blending with all the confused sounds of protracted wassail, rose from the chateau, that stood uplifted, as it were, above the common earth, flooded by the moonlight, and illuminated with a thousand torches through turret, keep, and battlement. The soft moonbeams had withdrawn themselves like a dream, leaving sweet tranquillity behind. Dim, beautiful and quiet as a corner of Paradise when all the angels are asleep, lay that portion which the

castle and its eminence cast into more dense shadow. There slept the convent, huge, black and lowly in comparison with the lighted castle that arose between it and the sky, but imposing and solemn in the midnight stillness that hung around it.

Between the lordly castle and the still house of religion, two figures might have been observed like black shadows threading the moonlight. One was a tall man, haughty in his step, and terrible in the iron sternness of his countenance whenever a glancing moonbeam made it visible. The other was a female, who followed him like a creature forced suddenly in full health and bloom to accompany some overmastering spirit down to the vale and shadow of death. Her head was uncovered; her brow pale as snow, and whenever the light touched it the beauty of her young face seemed frozen.

Something more than the slender figure of Rosalia was muffled up in the mantle that she carried rather than wore. She had drawn it fold by fold from her shoulders down over her bosom, and held it there huddled up in a desperate grasp, leaving the beautiful neck and golden ringlets which it should have covered, exposed and wet with the night dew. It was not the mantle alone that the poor young creature folded with such desperate fondness up to her heart. In the wild hurry of her movements as she gathered it up, now a tiny foot would break through the folds, which she would seize with one hand, press to her lips, and huddle up in the drapery again, as if in fear that the haughty man stalking darkly before her might turn with his cold eyes and witness the act. Sometimes she would put aside the garment with a shaking hand when they came to a lighted spot, and gaze down upon the little face it had covered till her pale lips were convulsed with the sobs she dared not utter, and the swell of her heart seemed to heave the child away that her arms so tightly clasped. Then a pair of bright eyes strangely star-like, for the night wind let all at once upon the child startled it, looked into hers questioningly, appealingly it seemed. Then the look became insupportable, and with the baby's little face pressed to her bosom, she would turn and look toward the castle as if fiercely impelled to spring aside from that cruel man and seek for help there. But a flash of mocking torch-lights, a dusky banner streaming forth to the night breeze, and snatches of music that seemed to her fiend-like and mocking, met her impulse. Then her limbs would relax; her step become slower, and with her poor white face bent helplessly down she crept on utterly desolate.

The old lord walked on with long, heavy

strides, that seemed to spurn with contempt the earth he trod. Sometimes he would look back upon the wretched young creature that followed him, but there was no pity in his glance; a hound that had broken from the pack would have touched his heart more nearly. When she felt these glances, Rosalia would hurry on with quick, nervous footsteps, like a frightened lamb dragged by some iron will to the sacrifice.

At length they stood upon the verge of that dense shadow cast from the castle eminence down upon the convent. It lay before them heavy and black like a pall, beneath which he was about to bury that young creature forever. The old lord paused here, thinking, perhaps, that he might awe her more deeply by stern looks than by cruel words, or perhaps desirous of reading the heart he had broken, in her countenance. Be this as it will, he paused sternly, and waited for her to come up. She stood before him white with anguish, and shivering from head to foot, but not from cold. The moonlight lay full upon her, dropping its pearls into the depths of her hair, that with all its golden brightness in the daytime, seemed shadowy and spirit-like as it floated back in disheveled tresses from her forehead. Never, never did the old noble forget the face that was uplifted to his that night. It haunted him in his sleep—it was reflected in the wine cup—it moved and swayed about his death-bed—it breathed upon the tall plumes that canopied it, and made them tremble. His heart was proud and hardened with pride, all its soft impressions had long since died out, but upon the cold live surface that face with its beauty and its anguish enameled itself; when the old man looked in upon his soul that face met him at the threshold, and he could never thrust it aside.

She was very still, but those blue eyes were unnaturally large and lustrous as she lifted them to his face. It seemed like a spirit that had chased him close up to the shadow. She moved the babe from her bosom, and held it out with both arms shrouded in the mantle, she could not have done it with the face exposed; he did not take the child, and with her eyes still riveted upon his, the mother drew it slowly and tremblingly back to her bosom. She began to tremble; her eyes grew black; her forehead radiant.

"You have a heart, you will not take it from me?" she cried, girding her arms tight around the precious burden, and sinking to the earth strengthless, helpless, but trembling with the wild re-action of her feelings.

"Not here," answered the old noble, and his voice after the sweet anguish of hers, fell like drops of cold lead upon the air. "There is yet some distance to walk before we reach the convent. I did but pause to say that after you reach

the portal there must be no converse between us, not even to the holy abbess, who is herself of our own blood, must the mischance that has fallen upon a noble house be known."

He waved his hand for Rosalia to arise: she made the effort, but only struggled feebly upon the ground: his words had smitten all the strength from her limbs. He reached forth his hand to her arm, this gave her life, the touch of that proud hand was terrible to her, she shrank back with a moan and staggered to her feet.

"Remember," said the count, "that upon your own discretion rests the future. Be silent, bring no disgrace upon our house, and both you and the child shall be cared for, even as if you were of the old, true and honorable blood. The Lady Abbess is old, she cannot live many years—the daughters of our house have ever fulfilled that holy trust. Is it nothing that we consent to give this honor to one of common birth?"

"Oh! not that—not that, there is but one thing between this and the grave that I think of," cried Rosalia, "my child, your pledge, once each year I shall see her, assure me of that, swear it, aye, here. The holy mother who fled to save her child will bend from her seat in heaven to listen. Tremble at the very thought of evading or breaking that pledge, for she who was a mother shall avenge me. Swear to this, else will I perish here on the earth at your feet, with your son's child girt to my bosom, rather than enter that pile."

She pointed to the convent with one hand, holding the babe firmly with the other. But the wildness, the pathos of her appeal was all of no avail to her cause. The old count had already pledged himself to that which she desired, and his haughty word once given was to a proud nature binding even as an oath. He said this calmly and coldly, and his chilling tones awed her into submission. He turned away and strode into the shadow that had crept toward them while they had been standing. Rosalia followed him feebly, and with an air of exhaustion, her anguish had been too great, and was now becoming vague. She was conscious of a hard, dull pang when the child was taken from her bosom; a flash of cold air seemed to strike upon her heart, as if the child only had kept it warm till then: after that she remembered nothing, save a tall, dark figure moving rapidly away, carrying her soul with him, it seemed to her. A turret looming against the sky with its thousand lights, mocking and twinkling, and glancing at her like spirits of living fire, and added to this the tinkle of a far-off bell, which her own cold hand had set in motion, mechanically as the hand will act sometimes when all the mind seems locked as in a vice. It might have been minutes

or hours that passed while Rosalia sat upon a stone flag, dull, dreamy, and unconscious of all things, waiting for what might come next. At length a ponderous door opened; she saw a light and behind it a figure. She arose feebly and walked toward it; a few words passed, she never remembered what, then the portal closed, and all was quiet again as if a human destiny had not that moment been accomplished.

### CHAPTER III.

YEARS went by, and change fell both upon the castle and the convent. The old lord had gone down to sleep among his ancestors beneath the chapel; the abbess had dropped away from her place of solemn trust, and her chair was filled by one of the holy sisterhood.

Lord Ernest was now master of all that feudal dominion and rude wealth that had been his father's, joined to the dower of a noble bride that rendered his possessions more than princely. In the first year of his marriage an heir was born to all these vast possessions, and like his father, Lord Ernest centred all his pride and hopes in this only son. The beautiful child was the only sunbeam with which the Almighty brightened that proud castle home. Lord Ernest did not love his wife; is there not a world of meaning in these few little words, "Lord Ernest did not love his wife?" You could have seen it in his cold, proud manner as he rode by her side in the hunt—you could see it in the half shrinking reserve which always hung around him when she was present—at the festal board, or alone in her sumptuous bower-chamber. His heart was with the past: his thoughts ever looked backward with sorrow and bitter regret, which time only deepened. He grew stately and proud as his father had been. All affection, all the passionate love, so ardent and impetuous in his youth, seemed locked up in his soul like dead roses hoarded away even from his own reach. But those were days of stately processions and proud appearances! People dreamed nothing of the nature which the iron will of a proud father had petrified when its life was in full bloom, as we sometimes find living flowers shrined deep in the coldest stone.

At times it would seem as if the young count found sources of unhappiness even in the joyous youth and beauty of his son. Occasionally when the child would climb his knee, or spring into his arms bright and rosy with the sweet craving for caresses which is so natural to childhood, a spasm as of pain would sweep over the noble countenance of the father, and putting the disappointed child away, he would go forth upon the ramparts and walk alone for hours, or, perhaps, depart

altogether from the castle, and wander around the ruins of an old stone house, now quite over-run and choked up with ivy, which had long been a picturesque object in the valley.

Why these moody fits came upon him no one ever knew, it was only certain that he always returned from his wanderings with saddened eyes and languid footsteps, and that for days after, nothing however mirthful could win a smile to his lip. If a few in the village remembered Rosalia, it was as a passing fancy of their lord for a maiden of inferior degree—as a humble daisy that somehow had been swept from his path, about the time of his proud marriage, no one exactly knew how; not even himself, for with regard to Rosalia or her child the old count had kept rigid silence even on his death-bed. That they still lived Ernest had little doubt, but how or where? These were the questions that drove him so often to the battlements or the ruined house. Honor and that domestic loyalty which was the spirit of knighthood, kept him from any direct effort to seek for her. She was safe and not unhappy, of this the old count had solemnly assured him: more than this he had no power to learn—more than this he dared not ask. He knew that there was that in his heart which made the question perilous.

How many women spend a whole life, pillowed upon a heart to which they are perfect strangers, and this all unconsciously as a child leans against a harp, ignorant and careless of the music that lies silent among its strings. More than half the human beings with which the world is peopled, having no capacity for deep affection themselves, fail to win even the knowledge of a want when the precious treasure of love is withheld from them. So it was with the proud wife of Count Ernest. She was one whose existence depended upon the outer world, she could no more have comprehended the deep love that had left her husband's heart desolate, than she could have returned that love had it existed for herself. How many there are who tread upon wild flowers all their lives, and never know that they are any thing but food for the bird that crops them.

Thus it was with the countess, she graced her state, she received homage to her beauty, she yielded gracious deference to her husband, because pride forbade anything that would lessen the dignity of a man honored by her hand. So, stately, proud and heart strangers, the two moved on till she paused upon the brink of a grave.

She died suddenly, that proud countess, in all the plenitude of her beauty and her power. Lord Ernest mourned for her then, for she had slept in his bosom, and there is something terrible in yielding up the being we have clasped to the cold arms of death, even though we loved

it not. Yet his grief amounted not to passion, for since the day of his marriage the bright waters of his heart had been closed up, and not even the angel of death had power to splinter the rock and trouble them to their depths.

For three days all that remained of that beautiful and haughty woman lay in state, that all who had bent before her in life might bow still lower beneath the sublime majesty of death. The stately chamber was blackened with clouds of velvet, and kindled up again with gleams of pale light. Six tall candles of wax flung a glow of silver over the pall, that laden with heavy tassels swept over the death-couch to the floor. Above her brooded a canopy, black as the half folded wing of death, upon which white plumes drooped like frozen sea-foam, heavy and motionless. Was there no hidden feeling in the heart of that lordly mourner as he paced to and fro upon the battlements of his castle? Did he never once reflect that death, while it filled his home with gloom, had made him a free man—free to act, to love, to marry at will? The old stone house in ruins, and black with ivy, lay beneath him—how could he look on that and not think of Rosalia, his first, his only true wife?

He did think of her for the first time in years, he drew a deep breath while gazing upon that ruined house, a deep, luminous glow came to his eyes as he remembered how impossible it was, now that he could seek her in the face of the world, that Rosalia should conceal herself longer from his knowledge.

As these thoughts grew upon him, the ice seemed thawing from his heart. He wept with strange tenderness when young Justine came in all the fulness of his grief, and flung himself upon the bosom of his parent for comfort in his first great trouble: these feelings broke forth in a burst of almost passionate tenderness, that surprised almost as much as it effected the youth.

While thought is lightning-like and feeling so capable of condensation, how much of the inner life may any human being know in three little days? It took less than that time to make Lord Ernest feel in every vein and nerve of his body that he was a free man—free to love and choose according to his own will. He looked into his soul, and amid the shadows that death had left there, found the one great passion of his life powerful, yet so powerful that, before the funeral came, the shadow of Rosalia, with her soft eyes and her golden hair, with her tenderness, her pride, would constantly glide like a sunbeam between him and the stately death-couch upon which his wife rested.

We have seen the bridal train, glittering with rainbow colors bathed in moonlight, winding from that noble old castle to the lone chapel,

where marriages and deaths had been linked together for centuries, like cypress leaves and blush roses woven in the same garland. Now we witness another procession. Dark was the castle, heavy and black were the clouds heaped in angry billows behind it; folds of sable velvet streamed out from the great flag-staff, around which the proud banner was swathed in gorgeous folds, and knotted down with sombre cordage. Music swelled along the path, soft, solemn, and low, rising slowly upward, and dying amid the black clouds, filling them, as it were, with tears. Torches moved like stars through the darkness, revealing the sweep of a pall, the sway of dusky plumes, the ghost-like outline of many figures.

This funeral train drew nearer to the chapel, and that was lighted up even as it was on the wedding night, yet it seemed dark, for the ivy had thickened around it like a pall, hiding even the rainbow glory that exhausted itself upon the stained windows. As the pall-bearers approached the door, they were met by a stream of light, misty and clouded with incense, and moving through it was a train of nuns in snowy garments, murmuring a low, sweet chaunt, such as the angels sing when one of their sweet sisterhood is weary.

When a lady of the castle died it was always thus. The abbess from the convent with all her nuns, in white veils and flowing robes, met the corpse at the door, greeting it with incense and holy music. Now these religious women led the way up to the altar, and through them the corpse was borne. Before it walked the abbess, holding a crucifix in her pale hands, following it were the mourners, Count Ernest and his son, then a long train of lords and ladies, who, from blood or marriage, claimed a right to weep while this solemn death service was in progress.

They set down the bier reverently before the altar: a burst of solemn music surged upward with a power that made the veil of incense gathering overhead break and ripple like a cloud.

Up to this moment Count Ernest had marked no single feature of the imposing ceremony. Solemn, sad, impressed by the gloom and power of death, he followed the body of his wife close up to the altar. He was so near to the dead now that not even a thought of Rosalia could force itself between him and all that gloomy velvet covering. He was very pale; his eyes were bent downward, and one hand rested upon the shoulder of his son, who wept with passionate grief.

The abbess placed one foot upon a step of the altar, and turned facing the bier: her hands were seen to quiver as they clasped themselves around the crucifix: her soft, holy eyes rested, one instant, on the widowed count. She thought that

she could trust herself—that religion—the holy vow—had frozen up all the passion and tenderness of her nature—but impelled by some invisible power he too looked up. A moment they stood thus face to face, the husband and wife—the dead separating them as the living had done. The chaunt, the music rose around them undisturbed. No one saw the agony that swept over these two pale faces—no one saw how cold her lips were becoming, how heavily the broad, white lids closed over her eyes, but the crucifix fell with a muffled crash to the coffin, a low moan, and the abbess sunk noiselessly like a heap of snow upon the altar.

They bore away the living and the dead, the wife stretched beneath her velvet pall, the wife muffled in her living shroud. Count Ernest looked on as they disappeared without a word or a sign. They were both dead to him. He had but one wish, a fierce, wild desire to be alone.

He was alone, and solitude did its work upon a passionate nature that had gathered force from perpetual restraint. Heart and brain both took fire, and one tortured the other till the foundations of his strength gave way.

"Justine!"

A noble boy who sat in a dim corner of the room, lifted his forehead from the hand that had supported it, arose and went up to the couch where his father was lying. Count Ernest, pale and with that haggard look about the mouth and eyes which mental torture leaves, arose to his elbow.

"Justine!" The youth bent down, and his face almost touched that of the sick man. •

"My father!"

The count fell back on his pillow, closed his eyes, and seemed to struggle for thought. He looked up at last, his lips parted, but with difficulty, and he said—"bend down, Justine!"

The youth bent his ear close to those marble lips, and during the next half hour a hoarse murmur stole through the room, sometime broken by sobs from that warm, young heart—sometimes disturbed for an instant by some faint exclamation. When the murmurs ceased, the youth stood up, holding the hand of his father with a hard grasp, and gazing on him with eyes full of keen affection.

"Though she were in her grave I would bring her," he said. A look of ineffable happiness stole over the dying face of the count; his pale lips moved again, and twice after the youth had left the chamber he murmured—"I bless thee, my son!—I bless thee!"

The priest who entered the chamber a few minutes after, saw from the tall window a slender form flitting through the twilight down toward the convent. He knew the graceful outline, the

quick, deer-like step, and wondered what could take an only son from his father's death-bed, when every moment threatened to make him an orphan.

The night had deepened, and all was darkness in the valley, when the old priest saw a gleam as of snow moving through the trees. It might be a human figure—it might be some wandering spirit hovering around the place of death. The doubt was in his mind when a noise in the room made him turn. There stood the object that had startled him, a frail figure, clad in white—for such was the religious dress of the convent, and face and hands shrouded in ample folds of linen.

"Together let us go hence, he is quiet now, and here is one to care for him," said Justine, gently approaching the priest. The old man bent his head and followed the youth. Then the figure drew back her veil and walked toward the bed. The sick man had been lying quite still, and with his eyes closed, but he felt her presence, and the moment her foot touched the floor rose up, and supporting himself with one shaking hand, looked upon her with a wild, bright stare, as only the dying can look.

"Rosalia!" he gasped, sinking back to the pillow, and holding out both arms.

She sunk to her knees. The garments of a nun swept around her, the nun's veil dropped down, and partly concealed the unutterable anguish in her features, but beneath those cold

white folds the woman's heart rose high and strong. What were religious vows to her then? What power on earth was there terrible enough to keep her from those trembling, outstretched arms? Penance, remorse, death, let them come! She lay upon his heart, her lips clung to his cold forehead, her shivering arms drew him closer to her bosom. He struggled, his heart was still, and yet he struggled.

"Not yet—not yet. Ernest! Ernest!"  
Oh! heavens, what agony it is to call for the dead when they can no longer answer us!

That morning at daybreak, when the landscape was heavy with that grey light which is so much more gloomy than entire darkness, a female in monastic garments all wet and heavy with the night moisture through which she had walked, stood before the portal of the convent. She was pale and grief-stricken as when she had stood upon the same spot years before, torn rudely from the world, and cast like a wreath of foam upon that cold threshold. But in her face there was, deeper, and subduing the grief that lay so pallidly upon it—a calm, holy light. Her soul now in truth turned heavenward with all its pure aspirations, and during many years which she presided over that quiet community she thanked God each morning that another link was dropped in the chain that was drawing her to heaven and to him.



## THE GIPSEY GIRL.

## A STORY OF EDWARD THE FOURTH.

BY SYBIL HASTINGS.

Up the polished stairs and along the lofty hall of Moorland, laden with flowers, bounded a light and graceful figure. Pausing at the oaken door of a turreted chamber, Leonora Estrange tapped lightly, listening with bent head while she knocked. But moment after moment went by, and still the silence within remained unbroken. At last, opening the door, Leonora went in.

The room was filled with a faint golden light, as the sunbeams stole through the voluminous folds of the draping curtains. With one glance at the couch, around which the crimson hangings were still fluttering with the motion of the opening door, she advanced to a small table, upon which stood an empty vase. Filling this from a crystal goblet, and seating herself, she began slowly to arrange her fragrant burthen.

Nearly an hour passed ere she had completed her fragrant task: then, as she brushed the last drooping leaf from before her, she arose, and crossing to the couch gathered back the silken curtains, and laid her hand gently upon the brow of the youthful sleeper, saying, in a low, sweet voice,

"Sleeping yet, dear lady, and the morning sun full an hour old?"

"Ah, Leonora! dear Leonora, is it you?" murmured the half awakened girl. "I must have indeed been weary to have slept thus." And rising, she threw a muslin mantle around her, and sank languidly into a cushioned chair. Here she bent over the beautiful blossoms with a whisper of delight as she parted their glossy leaves, and drew forth a wild rose tremulous with dew, and pressed it to her lips.

Suddenly the hand that was busy amid her golden curls trembled violently, and Leonora bent low to hide the varying color of her cheek, and the wild flashing of her eyes. The Lady Clare saw not the passionate flush that flitted across the beautiful face of her companion, for the light had passed when she looked up.

Half an hour afterward, there arose the soft notes of a bugle, followed by a stir within the paved court beneath the high window. Soon the quick clatter of a horse's hoof was heard. A faint color came to the delicate cheek of the Lady Clare, and a warm smile to her lip as she fastened the last fold of her riding-habit. She

received her cap and plume from the hand of Leonora, but the feather was vibrating as if a sudden gust of wind had swept through the open window; and yet there was not air enough astir to have lifted a leaf. As the Lady Clare touched the hand of Leonora, it was icy cold. A shade of uneasiness came over her placid features as she said, kindly,

"You are not well, dearest Leonora."

But the girl shook her head with a faint smile, and she turned away. The next moment the curtain was gathered back with a quick, eager motion, and Leonora, half enveloped within its folds, stood gazing down upon the group below. But not upon the proud steed, the beautiful little poney, nor the gaily dressed grooms did she look. Her eyes were fixed upon the tall and graceful figure of a cavalier of some two and twenty summers, who wore, with an air of indescribable grace, his simple riding-dress of Lincoln green. He stood leaning carelessly against the wall which surrounded the ancient dwelling, half castle, half hall. The sable plumes of his hat, drooping low over over his brow, concealed the upper portion of his face, leaving but the Grecian nose, and the chiseled lip, shaded by the dark chesnut moustache, exposed. Once or twice he struck his spurred boot upon the stones beneath, with a vehemence that brought the drooping forms of the indolent grooms quickly erect, and occasionally he pressed his hand upon his brow, as if some dark and troubled thoughts were crossing his reveries. Suddenly there was a stir, and the poney raised its head. At this Lord Francis Clairmont looked quickly up, for such was the name of the cavalier, and beheld the Lady Clare, who came forth leaning upon the arm of her only surviving parent, the old Earl of Moorland.

A pleasant smile parted the lips of the lovely girl, a bright color came to her cheek, as taking her hand the young lord bent low, saluting her with the graceful yet high-flown compliments of the day. The hand of Leonora was clenched as in sudden pain, while the dark eyes filled with a flashing light as she beheld the graceful form of Lord Clairmont bend to the child-like being before him. The next moment, and Clairmont, having lifted the Lady Clare to the saddle, sprang

into his own, while the whole party rode slowly forth.

Scarcely, however, had they cleared the little bridge which separated the castle from the open country, when Lord Clairmont drew in his rein, and with a brief excuse, wheeled his horse to return. Riding quickly as he re-crossed the bridge, he raised his eyes and beheld the white cheek and flashing glance of Leonora Estrange. Then a soft, winning smile flitted across his countenance; and the cold cheek grew warm, the eye lost its wild light, as she met the glance of those eyes, so large, so dark, yet so laughing in their beauty. For a moment they rested upon her; then there was a quick wave of his hand, as it raised his hat, falling impressively upon his heart. When he again rode forth with a light and easy seat, Leonora, though she watched him until lost in the distance, grieved no more; but an expression of radiant happiness dwelt on her face.

It was the evening of the same day, when Leonora might have been seen standing erect on a steep hill, with her eager gaze bent upon the muffled figure that came hurriedly up the steep hill toward her. The wild breeze of a coming tempest swept through the dim forest, which lay like the background of some fine painting behind her. Far away in the distance, rose the grey turrets of Moorland. She had stolen out heedless of the lowering clouds, to meet the betrothed of Lady Clare, the young Lord Francis of Clairmont.

Soon he gained her side, and turning one arm around her waist, he drew her yet deeper within the shade of the tall trees, murmuring,

"My own Leonora, have you come out this wild, dark night to meet me?"

He spoke in a voice of such fervent love and happiness, that the glowing cheek of the girl took a yet deeper hue. More than one hour passed, and still the young nobleman held the beautiful girl to his side, whispering vows of passionate eloquence and unchanging love, both he and she forgetful of the dark clouds flying wildly athwart the blue sky, and the low mutterings of the distant thunder. Suddenly there was a flash of lightning, followed by a crash, as if the heavens were rent in twain. It startled the young girl from her dream of happiness; it hushed the warm words upon the lover's lips. Clairmont said hastily,

"Leonora, my beloved, let us hasten away ere the storm breaks. I will go with you to the castle gates: none will recognize me in the increasing darkness. Come, dearest, lean upon me. Surely you will not fear, when Francis is with you. Would to God," he continued, "I might protect thee from the storms of life, as I may from the winds of heaven!"

"First, listen to me, ere I go hence, Francis,"

said his companion. "Before Leonora Estrange again leaves you, she must know if, evermore, like a guilty thing, she is to steal forth from yonder proud castle, treacherously to meet the affianced of her gentle and generous benefactress. Oh! Francis," she added passionately, "if you knew how bitter it is to look upon what she deems her privileged love for you; to see her gaze and smile upon you as if the right alone to her belonged; to hear her, day by day, speak of you to me as her future husband; and press the very flowers which thou hast given to me to her lips, murmuring fond and loving words, while I the while must stand coldly by."

"And does she indeed think of me thus?" he replied, half aloud. "She is very lovely."

The hand that rested within his own was quickly withdrawn; and ere the full consciousness of his error came over him, his companion was speaking with an air and voice of more than queenly hauteur.

"My lord, the Lady Clare's thoughts are doubtlessly often occupied with her betrothed: he will do well to think of her beauty and gentleness, forgetting," she added, bitterly, "her humble companion. It is not too late, my lord, to retrieve your error."

For a moment he stood gazing upon her with astonishment, as she stood before him, her chiseled features glowing with excitement, her graceful head erect. Then there mingled with his expression of admiration a touching sadness.

"Leonora, Leonora," he said, in a low, mournful voice. The next moment she was weeping upon his bosom, murmuring,

"Forgive me, Francis. It is but my love for you that makes me so wild and wayward."

He spoke not, but drew her arm gently within his own, hurrying her down the steep hill. Darker grew the night, and with the fall of the fast descending rain, he whispered,

"Are you not weary, Leonora?"

The bright face was raised to his, as the sweet voice answered,

"Was I not cradled within the forest? What fears the gipsy girl, when the loved one is beside her?" Perhaps it was well that the darkness hid the shadow that crossed the young lord's brow, as she spoke; but it passed away; and they hastened on.

"She shall be my own acknowledged wife, my fearless Leonora," murmured Clairmont, as he parted with her; for he felt that he had now a treasure, priceless indeed. But as he spoke, he forgot the Lady Clare. Yet, at that moment, within her silent chamber, the heiress of Moorland was bedewing the fading flowers before her, with tears of love and joy, guarding them as tokens of his affection.

Softly through hall and cottage, amid joy and sorrow, sighed the low musical voice of summer. Ruffling the blue waters of the Thames as it glided on amid the city bustle; with a soft and gentle sigh it lifted the drooping curtains of a silent chamber, and murmured within the dying ear of the good old earl, nature's last farewell.

"Francis," he said, faintly, "put back the curtains: I would again look out upon the blue sky; the loveliness of nature ere I go hence." The son obeying his bidding, again knelt beside him, pressing his lips to the cold hand clasping his own. Again the old man's lips parted, and he murmured—

"Lady Clare!"

From within the shadow of the curtains, which were gathered and twisted around the richly carved posts, stepped forth, with pallid cheeks and tearful eyes, the young lady of Moorland. A change had come over her since we saw her last. Her young lip had lost its sunny smile, and the blue eye its brightness. Sorrow and suffering had come to her, the favored child of prosperity. The mourning robes, clinging to the fragile form, spoke of death, and told that her idolizing father had joined her other lost parent.

"Lady Clare," he said, taking her hand within his own, and Francis of Clairmont turned away his head from that beseeching glance, "I cannot leave you alone in this cold world. Before I go hence, let me bless you as my child! I would leave you to one who will love you even better than myself. Will you not grant me this boon?" and he laid her hand within his son's. The Lady Clare looked timidly up, but the face of her betrothed was turned aside; and she beheld not the struggle, but too vividly portrayed in the blanched cheek and quivering lip.

Still, though the gentle pressure of her hand was unreturned, the Lady Clare dreamed not that aught but the mourner's sorrow was hushing the voice that should have been whispering its love. The dying earl took this silence for consent, and seemed happy. The priest who had waited in the ante-chamber was summoned, and the happy rite was performed. Clairmont was taken by surprise. Powerless to speak, he listened to the holy words which bound him evermore to her kneeling by his side. All seemed to him a dream; but when all was over, there arose before him the beautiful face of Leonora Estrange.

The old man's hand was now laid upon the bowed head of the young wife, and in this last effort the spirit passed away. He would have turned away with a world of wretchedness in his glance, but his new bride laid her head upon his bosom, whispering fondly—

"I will comfort thee, Francis."

He buried his face in his hands, the gentle,

loving words cut him to his heart; yet he could not forget that he loved the poor gipsy girl better than the heiress; and he felt for the moment as if the latter had entrapped him into a union. But even then, by the corpse of his father, and in the first moments of his married life, he could not restrain himself. He shook off, half angrily, the grasp of his bride, as she essayed gently to remove his hands from his face.

"Leave me—I would be alone," he said.

The Lady Clare knew not the terrible secret of his love for another, but, with a woman's keen instinct, she felt that his affections were not hers. No grief could have rendered him else so cold, so haughty, so angry in these first moments of wedded life. She turned sadly away, and left the chamber, hot, scalding tears chasing each other down her cheeks.

"Oh! Father above," she cried, "teach me to win his love. Anything—anything will I suffer, if his heart may only be mine at last."

While Lord Clairmont paces his apartment, now wrung with agony to find himself the husband of one he loves not, and now melting in grief as he thinks of the loss of his beloved parent—and while his bride prays alone in her solitary chamber, let us seek Leonora Estrange.

She had heard of the death of the earl and of the marriage of the Lady Clare; but she seemed to remember only the last.

"Perfidious lover," she cried, with white cheeks and clenched hands, "and is it thus you have betrayed me. You told me you loved not the Lady Clare: that you would beseech your father to release you from your engagement to her: that you would wed me. False, false, false, than hell itself," she exclaimed, bitterly.

She rose and began to pace the floor. Her hair, loosed from its band, fell in raven masses wildly over her shoulders, and her dark cheek glowed, like fire, with passion.

"But I will have my revenge," she said, "I know where to strike; and I will wait for my chance. Oh! Francis, Lord Clairmont," she exclaimed, with a mocking laugh, "you have not written to the house of Lancaster for nothing. I will intercept one of your letters. I will carry it to the king; and the monarch, incensed at your conduct, will send you from your bride for life. Ha! ha! will I not have revenge?"

Alone, half reclining upon a cushioned couch, with his graceful form enveloped in a robe of crimson, lined and edged with costly furs, with an air of ennui and weariness, lay England's king, the handsome and voluptuous Edward the Fourth. Scarce a token was discernible of the warrior king, in the languid form, the sunny brow, and small, voluptuous mouth, as he lay with drooping eyelids, dreaming, not of past victories,

or stirring triumphs, but of the many bright beauties that graced his brilliant court.

Presently his reveries were broken by the entrance of a favorite attendant. Edward looked dreamily up, as the page spoke.

"A lady craves audience, my liege," he said, "and will not be denied admittance."

"Is she old, or still in youth, Francois?"

"I should say far advanced, sire, were it not for a white hand that gleamed out for a moment's space, as she drew her mantel about her, when my Lord Hastings, and Woodville came near."

"Then, in heaven's name, admit her without delay. We have not looked upon a new face this many a day." And, in a moment the stranger entered.

"Throw back that envious hood," said Edward, as she stood close veiled before him, "we would fain look upon the brow of our fair petitioner. Fair indeed," he whispered, admiringly, as suiting the action to his words, he withdrew the hood from the somewhat frightened girl, disclosing the beautiful face of Leonora Estrange. She paused a moment, and then threw herself at his feet. Her cheek was of a marble hue as she extended a letter to him.

Edward took it carefully, but as his glance rested upon it, he bent forward with a kindling eye and frowning brow. Once or twice he read, and re-read; then looking gravely down upon the fair girl, he said, somewhat sternly—

"And how, pretty one, came you by this?"

"Lord Francis Clairmont," she said, "bade me destroy it, but knowing it to be of somewhat treasonable import, I have brought it to you, my liege, for safe-keeping."

"And what may my Lord of Clairmont be to you, that he should deposite letters of such high value in your care?"

"Nothing, sire," answered Leonora, while the warm blood mantled her cheek and brow.

"Come," he said, smilingly, "I can read the riddle: he loves thy fair face, and then, thou lovest thy sovereign better."

"There is no love between us: once it were otherwise; but now the heart which he has betrayed, knows no softer unction than revenge. Yes," she added, in a deep, low voice, "Leonora Estrange lives but for revenge. The deed is done. With your leave, sire, I will withdraw."

"Nay, stay," said the monarch, laying his hand lightly upon her arm to detain her, "sit thee here, poor child, by my side, and we will see if we cannot comfort thee," he whispered, as he drew her to his side. "God of heaven, he must be a craven," cited the monarch, "that could be false to those bright eyes! And now, pretty trembler, say, shall not Edward comfort the poor heart that throbs so wildly? By this

token, he swears fidelity evermore to these lovely lips." He would have pressed his own to those of the pale girl, but like lightning she sprang up, and stood with head erect, flashing eye, and crimsoned cheeks.

"Stand back, my liege," she said, "the monarch of proud England forgets himself strangely, when he leaves it for one like me to re-call him thus. I came not here to complain of Lord Francis of Clairmont, or to seek the love of England's king; but to accomplish my destiny. My liege, fare-thee-well," and she turned to withdraw.

The monarch stood wrapt in mute admiration of the bold girl as she spoke; but when she turned, he sprang forward, crying—

"By my halidom, this proud spirit suits thee well. Bold, forsooth must be the one that dares trifle with thy woman's heart. But do you know, girl," he said, as his eye again fell upon the paper within his hand, and he folded it, placing it within his bosom; "do you know that you have doomed your recreant lover to a traitor's death?"

Leonora sprang forward, and laid her small white hand upon the king's arm, while her red lips grew pallid and quivered with agony as she cried—

"To death! oh, sire, you do but jest with poor Leonora? Say it not again: re-call the words you but now have spoken."

Edward looked long and fixedly upon the agonized brow, upturned to his, upon which remorse had already stamped its iron signet. He laid his jeweled hand upon the pale brow, and bending low, whispered—

"And if to thy prayer, I spare the life of Francis of Clairmont, will Edward win the love of Leonora?"

But no blush now mantled the young cheek; the life blood was pressing heavily upon the heart; for the truth had struck her for the first time, that it was not alone to imprisonment, but to death; and by her hand, that Clairmont was betrayed. Hence the monarch's words awoke scarce a thought within that throbbing heart. Raising the long lashes, her glance fell coldly upon Edward's as she answered—

"The love, the fidelity of the subject, I will bestow, and if my sovereign be but just to himself and others, that will be enough. I have nothing else, my lord, to give."

"Then, by heaven, Clairmont dies ere another week has passed," answered the king.

Leonora drew herself up.

"And I tell you, false king, false alike to honor and justice, that he shall not die."

And again with flashing eye and dauntless mein, she confronted England's king; then suddenly turned from the apartment.

The word was spoken. The final sentence had

gone forth. Doomed to an ignominious death, on the breaking of another dawn, the young Lord of Clairmont sat in his dungeon. His head was bowed upon his folded arms; his cheek was pale with the spirit's strife; and his dark eye had lost its wonted fire. The light of his soul had gone out when he learned that he was betrayed, and by the hand of Leonora.

Long he remained buried in deep and painful thought, until a low, half-stifled sob fell upon his ear. Uncovering his face, he looked tenderly down, where by his side the Lady Clare had sat, with her head resting upon his knee. Sadly and caressingly he laid his hand amid those golden curls, clustering around the pale brow; and bending down fondly, kissed the tear-laden eyes. As he did so, he murmured—

"Thou alone, of all the world, art true."

Amid her tears she looked up, as these words, like blessed music, fell upon her ear.

He had scarcely spoken, when the door was gently opened, and a muffled figure stood silently gazing upon the scene. Directly she advanced with faltering steps, and spoke in trembling accents. The color came flushing to the cheek of Francis of Clairmont.

"My lord," she said, as she threw back her mantel: and both Francis and his wife started as their glances fell upon that beautiful face, now so wan and faded. "My lord, Leonora has come to save the life which she has periled. Will you not trust me?" she asked, in a voice of touching sadness, as she knelt before him.

Francis of Clairmont looked sadly down upon her for a moment without a word: then he spoke,

"Have you come here, Leonora," he said, "to mock the doomed man with idle hopes and soft words? You who have betrayed me to death. Yet I thank thee, Leonora, for the boon of thy presence. I would return the wrong thou hast done, by mercy. Francis of Clairmont loved thee."

Here a low cry broke from the young wife, but he laid his hand upon her head, as he continued,

"I loved thee until thou didst betray me to infamy and death; then the wrung soul in its agony turned to a softer, a truer heart."

A shudder ran through the slight figure before him, and Leonora spoke in a voice of sharp agony, that fell painfully upon the listener's ear,

"Not a truer, not a fonder heart," she said.

"Francis, the poor gipsy girl would have sacrificed all but honor to have saved thy life. Behold here she still will save you. Take this cloak and hood," casting them from her, as she spoke, "wrap them around thee, and pass out. None will heed thee. At the foot of the stairs a boat waits thee, and with it, those who will bear thee away in safety. And then, lady," she said, approaching the Lady Clare. "Let me look upon

the face, which smiled upon my lone youth; and pray for pardon for all the wrong I have done thee." She spoke hurriedly. Clairmont moved not. She took her mantel, and threw it around the young lord; but a sharp thrill ran through her whole frame, as she touched the hand that so often had fondly clasped her own.

When the young nobleman felt the burning touch of those slight fingers, he raised himself, saying—

"And can you think, Leonora, that I will leave you to the revenge of a baffled king?"

"Edward will not harm me," answered Leonora, "a night's imprisonment will be all; and it matters little now," she murmured to herself, "whether the roof of palace or prison cover this blighted head."

Clairmont still hesitated, but she took his hand and joined it to that of the Lady Clare, saying,

"She is good and true: be thou so to her. Go—before it is too late."

The next moment she was alone.

When the echo of Clairmont's step had died away, she threw herself upon the couch, and drew the covering around her so that if the guard looked in, he might still fancy Clairmont slept. The caution proved not in vain; for in a little while, the door opened, and a man's head intruded. But in the dim light, the guard beheld that motionless form. Murmuring to himself, "he sleeps soundly his last sleep on earth," he went on his round.

Who shall tell the bitter and sad thoughts that swept across the soul of Leonora Estrange, through the hours of that long, dark night? They were too deep for endurance at last; for when the first grey light of early morning filled the room, and the guards entered to convey the young Lord of Clairmont to the block, they found only the corpse of a young girl lying quietly upon his pallet. Even the rough and hardened soldiers turned awe-stricken from the sweet pale face before them. Many eyes looked upon that lifeless form that day, and at last the tidings reached the monarch's ear. With a presentiment of the truth, he entered the room, and bent above the dead. For many moments he stood motionless: then a tear was seen to gather within his eye, and fall silently amid the dark braids of the corpse, beautiful even in death.

"For her sake, I pardon my Lord Francis of Clairmont," at last, said the king. "Let her have Christian burial; and let masses be said for her soul."

Taught by the bitter lessons of youth, Lord Clairmont was ever after true to his sweet wife. But both he and the heiress of Moorland often conversed sadly of Leonora Estrange, the poor GRACEY GIRL.

## THE MUSIC TEACHER

BY FRANK MERVALL.

At twenty-one, after having graduated at Yale College, and been admitted to the bar, I found myself very comfortably established in a small, but handsome suite of rooms in one of our leading Southern cities. I soon began to feel quite at home among the warm-hearted Carolinians, and became well known as a lawyer and a private individual.

I observed that about nine o'clock, every morning, a young lady passed my office. She was sometimes attended by a young man, whose face was stamped with the unmistakeable sign of consumption. She was, as I supposed, his wife: he generally held her arm, or relieved her of a roll of music, that she always carried. She was not at all striking, but, on examination, proved extremely pretty—very lovely—of that style usually denominated blonde. For more than a year, she passed regularly. Once I was standing at my door, when a whiff of air blowing away her music, she stooped to pick it up, but I saved her the trouble, and was rewarded by a sweet smile. After this, whenever I was in view as she passed, she bowed. At last her walks ceased for a week, and I saw nothing of her till one morning, as I was anxiously watching for her, she again appeared. Her cheek was paler, her step slower than usual, and she was dressed in deep mourning. I never saw the young man accompany her again.

How many stories I invented for her history. First, she was a girl going to school, and her companion an admirer—what school-girl had ever so serene a brow? Next, a young widow—but why did she so regularly pass as if to some employment? Then, a *modiste*—no! what dress-maker was ever so refined, and how account for her roll of music, and her former attendant? No! I only perplexed and provoked myself by endeavoring to ascertain who and what she was. An unexpected incident disclosed all this to me. One morning, about a year after her assuming black, she was passing along rather faster than usual, and tripping over a stone, fell to the ground with a scream of pain. I rushed out, raised her and asked what I could do for her.

"I fear my foot is sprained," she replied, gently. "And as you are so kind, as to ask me, I will be much obliged if you will call a chaise."

"Certainly, madam," I replied. "In the meantime, pray come into my office."

As she was unable to walk, I lifted her in, and

laid her on a sofa as gently as possible, but she could not repress a movement of pain.

"Pray, remain here," said I. "I will summon my housekeeper, and call a carriage."

When the surgeon arrived, he pronounced the ankle not to be sprained, but broken. She sighed, and said, "I am sorry for that, as it will prevent my teaching for some time. Is the chaise at the door?"

She could not rise without assistance, and was evidently in great pain. The surgeon and I accompanied her to her boarding-house, and I was made glad to have an invitation to call the next day. I did call, and repeated my visits, again and again. When more familiarly acquainted, I learned from her own lips her history.

Alice Hastings, even when I first knew her, was but twenty, yet she had been married nearly three years. Her father, a rich merchant, had suddenly failed, and she had been compelled to seek her livelihood as she best might—her parent having died of a broken heart soon after his failure. She had finally married a poor author, to whom she had been very much attached. She helped him to support themselves by teaching music, and that was what carried her past my office so regularly. Her husband, naturally delicate, was continually writing, and it was with difficulty she could prevail upon him to quit his pen at midnight. Her first and only child died, and her husband, by overtasking his strength, became a victim to consumption. His book was at last finished. She said that she knew that it was imperfect, but that there was so much beauty and originality in the plot, so much delicacy and vivacity in the style, that its defects were more than compensated by its beauties. He sent it to the publishers; after a week of painful suspense, it was returned, accompanied by a note, pointing out its worst defects, and entirely passing over the merits.

When he had finished this cruel letter, he fell with a deep groan to the ground, the dark blood flowing from his parted lips. He had broken a blood vessel. In a few hours, he was no more.

"As you know, Mr. Mervall," she said, when she had concluded her story, "I continued giving music lessons, till this accident put it out of my power."

After some time, the fair patient began to recover, and at the end of six weeks the splints

were removed from the delicate foot. Alice was now able to walk. She expressed a desire to resume her lessons at once. I felt that the moment had come.

"I cannot see any necessity for this," I said, "and it grieves me to think that you are thus resolved to toil for your daily bread."

"But I have no other resource—I act from imperative duty," she replied, slightly blushing.

"But will you trust this to me, and allow me to make an arrangement more satisfactory to myself at least?"

She turned away her face, which was suffused with blushes. I gained courage.

"I think I can. May I try?" I continued.

"Yes," she resumed, hiding her face.

I caught her hand and proceeded.

"You give me full permission?"

"I do," still faintly speaking.

"And you will not retract?"

"No—never."

All was over—I caught her in my arms and kissed her more than once, assuring her that I knew of but one way, and that was by accepting me in marriage.

In a few months we were united.

## THE ORPHAN; OR, MY GRANDMOTHER'S STORY.

BY LYDIA M. MAPLE.

"WELL, dear grandmother," said Mary Summer, "as you and I are to pass the evening together, all alone, will you not entertain me by telling the long promised story of your younger days?"

"Yes, my dear," replied the good old lady, "I will, with all my heart."

Mary took a stool, placed it by her grandmother, and sat down to listen.

"I was an only child," began the narrator, "my parents married young, and though industrious and economical, yet at my father's death we were left with but few of this world's goods. Little do I remember of my father, he having died when I was but four years old. My mother took in sewing, and with her efforts and the little we had left, we made out to live.

"It was just five years after my father died, when my mother was laid upon a sick bed, from which she never rose again. Her over exertions for our support, together with a hard and rigorous winter, had brought on consumption. Day by day did I watch over her, and administer to her wants as well as I could. She *knew*, she felt that she must die, and oh! the heavenly truth that fell from her lips, I shall never, as long as memory lasts, forget.

"It was a beautiful morning in spring, and as she lay in a quiet slumber, I went out and gathered some flowers, and placed them so that her eye would rest upon them when she awoke. She noticed them, and giving me one of her sweet smiles, she strove to comfort me, in view of her approaching dissolution. 'My love,' she said, 'remember there is one above who has promised to be the orphan's father; He will take care of you; in His promises I rest secure. Make Him your guide and counsellor, and He will be your protector and father. He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and will He not take care of my child? *He will*, I know *He will*! His promises are faithful and true.' She was so much exhausted she could proceed no further; she lay some time with her eyes closed, and her lips moving as if in prayer. She again opened them, and calling me nearer to her, she put one arm around me and gave me a kiss, and whispered, 'trust in the Lord. He will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' These were her last words.

She now sank into a quiet slumber, but alas! it proved to be the sleep of death.

"I gazed long and earnestly on her pale and lovely face, and thought that but a little while and I should see her no more. Then it was my grief broke forth: I kissed those lips which never before had refused my embraces. I called her name: no answer did I receive. That eye, which had always looked on me with affection, now was closed forever: that voice, which had always spoken words of kindness and comfort, was now hushed in death. I sobbed long and bitterly as the full meaning of the word *orphan* came upon me.

"Preparations for the funeral were completed, and I must take the last look of all that now remained of my mother. I had, in some measure, become calm, but when I looked upon her face, and thought it was the last time I ever should behold it, I could not restrain my emotions. 'Oh! my mother! my mother!' I cried, 'shall I never see thee again? Shall I never more hear thy voice, encouraging me on in the path of duty? Is it—is it possible that thou art dead? Oh! my mother! my mother, oh! that I could lie down by thy side!'

"The violence of my grief was such that the neighbors feared some fatal consequence might follow, and I was not permitted to attend her remains to their long, last resting-place. Oh! never shall I forget that night of bitter anguish, and the feeling of desolation which came over me. I cried for hours, and many times called upon her name. Toward morning I fell into a quiet slumber; I dreamed I saw her: she appeared hovering over me with wings like an angel; and whispered to me in her same sweet voice, 'my child, do not grieve for me, I am happy now; and though you will see me no more, yet I shall ever be near you. I am thy guardian angel now, I shall watch over you till the day when you are summoned to leave this earth; then will I bear you in my arms, and lay you at my Saviour's feet, where we shall be forever happy, and never more be separated.'

"Soon after, I awoke: I felt a calmness resting on my spirit, there was some comfort in that dream, the thought that she was watching over me gave courage to my heart, and strength to



my will to overcome my evil propensities, and live such a life as would secure to me a home in heaven with her.

"That day I visited her grave. I wept long and bitterly. I was unwilling to leave the place, it seemed like holy ground. I raised my eyes to heaven, and breathed a prayer that God would be my guide and father, and at last take me to dwell with Him.

"As I entered our now desolate home a lady met me, and kindly offered me a home until my plans were arranged in regard to the future. I staid with her a month, when I had the opportunity of entering a family in the capacity of a nursery girl. Three little children were under my care. I was to take the whole charge of them; learn them to read, attend them in their walks, and amuse them when at home.

"I had just begun to have a thirst for knowledge, and all my leisure moments were employed in adding to my stock already acquired. I had improved my time so well, that at the end of spring I left my situation of nursery girl for that of a teacher of a school.

"I had many severe trials here; some of my scholars were of a rebellious, refractory spirit, while others were examples worthy of imitation. Tired and vexed with the labors of the day, how refreshing and soothing to my heart to have had one friend to whom I could pour out my complaints! to have had the sympathy of my mother! Oh! yes, then it was I felt most keenly the loss. At such times I would remember the hymns she taught me: and sing till I felt relieved of my troubles. Then too my thoughts were raised above this earth, and I held sweet communion with my Father on high, from whom cometh all our joys, and who giveth us sorrows to wean our thoughts and affections from earth, and set them on heaven.

"One day I returned from my school more than usually sad, I felt cast down in spirit; I thought I had no friend in this wide world. I was disheartened. I sighed for the time to come when I should be freed from the troubles and sorrows of earth, and dwell in that land 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.' I sang the beautiful words of Watts.

"When overwhelmed with grief,  
My heart within me dies,  
Helpless and far from all relief,  
To Heaven I lift mine eyes."

"I ceased singing, and at my window sat enraptured in thought: I was awakened from my reverie by a gentle tap on my shoulder, and turning round beheld Anna, the daughter of the lady with whom I boarded. 'Come Maria,' she said, 'Aunt Clara is here visiting, and she wants you to sing to her, she thinks you have been

singing long enough to yourself, and now she wants you to gratify her.' I went down, but with the resolution of not singing. In a large arm-chair sat Aunt Clara; with a pleasant smile and an affectionate grasp of the hand she welcomed me. She requested me to sing. I declined. She gave me a mournful look, and said pleasantly, 'but you will not refuse me, for I am blind.' 'Oh, no,' I quickly answered, 'I did not know you were blind. I will do anything to please you.' I then sang the Orphan: and when I came to the lines,

"Thou father of the fatherless  
Pity an orphan's woes;"

the tears came into her eyes, and she gave me a look full of sympathy. She inquired into my history, and I related it. 'And what do you intend to do after you have finished your school?' she said. I replied I wished to go to school as long as my means would last. 'There is a very good school in the place where I live,' she said, 'and I should be very happy to have you make my house your home, and attend school.' This unexpected kindness from a stranger completely overcame me: I burst into tears, and amidst sighs and sobs I expressed my thanks. My school was to close in three weeks. Miss Sinclair (for that was her name) staid till the close of my course, when we both started for my new-found home.

"Miss Sinclair was the daughter of a rich merchant. Her parents had been dead several years; she was now about sixty years old. When she was twenty years old she was taken sick with the typhus fever. The fever raged with great violence, and no hope of her recovery was entertained: in process of time the fever abated in some degree. Her eyes now began to be affected: day after day her fever gradually abated, but the inflammation in her eyes increased, till at last the sight was entirely destroyed.

"As there were but two children, and as the property was to be equally divided between them, she was consequently left very rich. Her brother, at her desire, gave her the beautiful country-seat as her portion. As she was blind, she did not wish to mingle much in society, and the retirement of this beautiful retreat was well adapted to her situation. And this lovely spot was now to be my home! A home which a stranger had offered to a friendless, homeless orphan!

"The hours not spent in study were devoted to her. I read to her, I walked out with her, in short, I did all in my power to divert her, and make her happy. I became her most confidential friend. One day in returning from our customary walk, a servant met us, holding in his hand a letter, exclaiming, 'from Europe! from Europe!' Aunt Clara desired me to read it to

her: it was from her nephew, who was travelling in Europe: and had now arrived in Italy; where he should remain some time, desiring her in the meantime to write to him. He was a young man of superior talents, and respected and beloved by all. He had graduated at one of the best colleges of the country, and won the highest honors. He had gone through the study of law, and was now travelling for the purpose of enlarging his knowledge of manhood, and the world. It necessarily devolved on me to answer his letters.

"The returning steamer from England brought us another letter from Edward Sinclair; again it was answered, and again another one was sent. A year had passed away since he had left his native land to sail for the old world, and now his return was daily looked for.

"One pleasant moonlight evening I was sitting at the piano playing some of Aunt Clara's favorite airs. I had just commenced 'The Welcome Home,' when Aunt Clara said she wished when Edward came home I should be playing that; it would seem as if we thought of him, and wished him back again.

"Suddenly a voice cried, 'do you indeed, my dear aunt?' It was the voice of Edward, who had been standing at the door, and had overheard our conversation! 'Your wish is fulfilled, for here I am. The steamer arrived this afternoon, and I made all possible haste to come and see you:' then turning round to me, he said, 'is this my fair correspondent, the one from whom I received so many interesting letters from home?' I bowed in assent, when Aunt Clara introduced me as her niece and his cousin. 'Well then, my new cousin,' he said, 'will you sing for me the Welcome Home?' I complied, and sang it through.

"He staid with us a month, and never did time

fly so rapidly; it seemed but a week. He then went to a neighboring city to practice his profession: but every Sabbath found him passing the day with us.

"A year glided pleasantly away. One bright moonlight evening, Edward asked me to take a walk with him, 'for,' said he, 'I may not see you again, for a long time, and I want something to think of when I am gone. I am going west for several months. Will you ever think of me during that time?' 'Oh, yes,' I quickly replied, 'I shall think of you very often, the hours which we have passed together have been too pleasant to fade very soon in the memory.'

"I will not relate to you, however, the whole conversation; but, to make a long story short, that evening witnessed our engagement, provided Aunt Clara would consent; and this consent I found a very easy thing to gain.

"A year from that evening we were united. I still continued to live with Aunt Clara, for she said I must not leave her, and she could not endure the thought of passing the remainder of her days amidst the din and noise of a bustling city.

"And now, Mary, the beautiful place you love so well to visit in the summer season, is the same where these happy events occurred."

"I shall now," said Mary, "take a double pleasure in rambling amongst the garden walks, for I shall think of what delightful times you and grandfather had together: but, dear grandmother, what became of Aunt Clara?"

"She lived three years after our marriage, when she was taken sick and died, bequeathing to us her whole property, except a few pensions to the domestics. Thus you see, my child, that God is truly the father of the fatherless."

## THE REMEMBERED DREAM.

BY A. J. WHITTAKER.

Nor to the calm, blue lake alone the moonlight glory came. But to the sleeping rose bending so meekly with the summer dew; the trembling vine-leaf resting beside the cottage door; the closed petal of the meek violet: to all of these it came as a blessing after the long and sultry day.

You would have said that the humble cottage, in the valley, had become a grand, ancestral palace, so sweetly did the shadows rest upon it—so bravely did the ancient trees stretch over it their giant arms. Just by the lattice, where the rays could scarcely struggle in, some earnest words were spoken and vows were breathed from lips all eloquent with love, and the brow of the fair young girl flushed with the deep joy of this, her first and purest passion.

Still further down the valley—there where the village church was almost hidden by the foliage, the white grave-stones glittered in the light so plainly that you might almost read the epitaphs upon them. Very peacefully the holy dead were sleeping in that silent church-yard. They were gathered from the cottages around. Each home had lost an inmate. The aged patriarch had left his old arm-chair by the ancient hearth-stone, and his little grandchild still stood there, wondering when he should hear another story of the times gone by. The strong man had come in from his weary, daily toil to this, his last eternal rest. The miser striving so long, so eagerly for gold was sleeping there, but to his dream there came no glitter of the yellow dust which he had left on the dark brink above him. And the sweet and sinless babe had gone to be an angel, and many a time, no doubt, at the calm twilight had come back again and hovered near the flowers which decked the humble grave, and then returned to heaven. And so, they rested peacefully. The cares of life were all forgotten. Its agony was over. The long, sad years of strife

and fear—the ceaseless toil for bread—the hopes so long deferred—the weary, anxious prayers for light, or hope, or joy, were all passed by forever, and the flowers now bloomed as sweetly there as though no human hearts were resting underneath.

On other and on sadder scenes the moon looked down that night. Far away in a great city there stood a dark and dreary prison—not very dark or dreary at this time, however, for the moon had gilded the massive walls and grated windows with her mild light. Deep within were desolate hearts—hearts crushed and sad and broken. But at this home their crimes and sorrows were forgotten. Deep sleep had sealed their eyelids—had transformed those men of guilt and blood as if by magic, from the despairing, hardened inmates of a prison to the harmless dreamers of the free air and the sweet sunlight. Far down the long and silent corridor in the darkest portion of the prison, some cells had been set apart for the more obdurate criminals, and within the most gloomy one of all, pinioned and bound, slumbered a lonely man—a man whose career for many years had been no common one of petty crimes committed at long intervals, but rather a ceaseless and determined course of the deepest and most desperate villainy. For twenty long and desolate years had he been thus closely confined without the least apparent reformation, until at length so fierce and terrible had he become from long imprisonment that the keepers dared scarcely approach him. All the better attributes of humanity had left him long ago, and in their stead came nothing but blasphemy and despair. And standing by his bedside, in that dreary cell, at that solemn midnight hour, you would have almost deemed him some restless fiend come back to haunt the earth. Suddenly the moonlight streamed through a crevice in the wall and rested on his features. The chains clanked heavily as he moved slightly in his sleep, and as the light

lay on his face a smile came to his lips—such a smile as will sometimes come to us in pleasant dreams. That man of crime was dreaming now, not as he had done a thousand times before, of the sinful deeds he had committed; not of his capture, and the trial, and the sentence, and the black walls around him, and the heavy chains upon him; not of the dreary hours, which had gone by in thousands, since he first entered that gloomy cell; but rather of his better life; of the innocence and freedom of his boyhood; of familiar faces which had looked upon him lovingly before his first sad crime; of a dear old cottage home far away among the hills—a home around whose humble door the vine-leaves still were clinging, and by whose hearth-stone still sat, perhaps, his aged parents mourning their long lost son—of a sweet sister whom he adored—of his mother's prayer as she blessed him many a time—of the father whom he loved and yet forsook—of all these and still more he was dreaming there, with the light upon his face. And then amid these dear old memories he seemed to hear familiar voices from the past; voices reproving not his sins, reminding him no more of his follies and his frailty, but speaking gently and in supplication—beseeching him to come back from the cold, unfeeling world to his wild-wood home again, and take his seat once more around that household hearth. These memories had their influence—these voices came with joy, and to the sleeping captive there, the hardened criminal, the dark, deserted, wretched man, they came with deepest blessings—came to attend him back again to the olden, primal purity, to the haunts of his early childhood; came as the angels always come to the erring and degraded, with meekness and with love. And so the vision ended. Cottage and vine grew dim and indistinct. The haunts of his childhood faded into air. His aged parent and his sweet sister left the cheerful hearth, and the fire went out forever. His mother's prayer died into an echo. There came no words of love, no song of consolation. The walls were still around him as they had been for years, and his fetters still clanked heavily—and with the words,

“mother, dear mother!” trembling on his lips, the sleeping dreamer woke. And the moonlight came on quietly and glittered on his tear-drops as they fell.

That man of guilt was changed—transformed by the silent magic of a dream—brought back from the forbidden bye-ways to the sunshine and the flowers. The keepers were astonished at the change, but the reformation was complete. Humble, repentant and sincere, he was no longer to be feared, and so ere many days they took his fetters off and brought him to the light again. Weeks, months and years went by, until at length the atonement had been made—the penalty was paid, his punishment was ended, and he went forth to the world again a changed and contrite man. His footsteps turned with eager haste toward his early home—that home whose threshold he had not crossed for more than thirty years. It was the evening of a winter day when he arrived. A cheerful fire burned within. Around it were gathered at this very hour those dear ones whom he had deserted so many, many years before, and as the red light fell upon their faces he could see that each one wore a look of grief. He paused and listened for a moment at the door. They were speaking concerning himself—their long-lost son and brother—were wondering whether he still lived—and their voices quivered with emotion, and their tears fell mingling with each other as they spoke of his innocent childhood, and referred with sorrow to the day of his strange departure. A moment more and the door opened—the prodigal returned. It were a vain attempt to tell you of that blessed meeting—of the astonishment and joy and tears which followed. You should have stood without and heard the earnest, heartfelt thanks which then and there went up to God for that wanderer's return. Or you might go there even now and listen with humility to their thanksgiving.

The flowers are somewhat withered, and the green moss grows upon the cottage roof, and the wild grass almost hides the little violets—yet the inmates of that home will tell you still of the Remembered Dream.

## THE RUNAWAY MATCH.

BY JANE WEAVER.

"CAROLINE, I wish you would remain a moment," said Mr. Warren, as his daughter was about to leave the parlor.

"Well, papa," she said, "what is it?"

She strove to look unconscious, but her varying color, and the nervous movement of her lips, betrayed secret agitation; in fact she suspected the purpose of her parent.

"I thought," said Mr. Warren, "that, when I forbade young Collins my house, you were prepared to submit to the prudence of my decision. We talked the matter over, Caroline, if you remember, and I was at considerable pains to convince you that he was idle, wasteful, and, I feared, dissipated, in short a very unfit person for any woman to trust her happiness with. You silently agreed with what I said, at least you said nothing in reply. I fancied I had persuaded you, for I thought your own good sense, to which I appealed, would see the matter in a light similar to that in which I and your mother beheld it. Judge then of my inexpressible pain when I saw you walking, arm-in-arm, with him, in the outskirts of the city, to-day."

He paused, and Caroline held down her head abashed. "I was not mistaken," she said, to herself, "it was *pa* whom I saw."

Mr. Warren waited, for more than a minute, for her to reply, but, as she continued silent, he went on—

"Now, Caroline," he said, "I wish you to look on me, as what I am, the best friend you have in the world, and one who has no motive, much less any wish, to advise you wrong. It is a common mistake of young people, especially of those of your sex, to suppose that their parents wish to tyrannize over them in the affair of marriage. Believe me, nothing is generally further from a parent's thoughts! It is not unfrequent indeed that a father differs from a daughter as to the wisdom of her uniting herself with a certain

suitor; but, in such cases, the father is, nine times out of ten, right, and the child wrong. The parent, from his knowledge of men, from what he hears on the street, and, from other sources, usually arrives at a juster conclusion respecting a young man's character, than a daughter, who has little, or no means of ascertaining the truth. In the case of this young Collins, I *know* him to be extravagant, idle, occasionally intemperate in his habits, and head over ears in debt: besides this he has a violent temper. I beseech you, Caroline, my dear, do not give way further to this infatuation of yours."

As Mr. Warren spoke, he approached his daughter and tenderly took her hands. She burst into tears, looked up into his face, and said—"oh! but, papa, I love him, and he loves me: he says he will throw himself away if I do not marry him: surely, surely, if I *can*, I *ought* to reform him."

Mr. Warren shook his head. "Caroline," he said, severely, "this is sheer folly, miserable infatuation! No woman ever reformed a man, whose principles were so loose as those of Collins; a wretch, who, in his own words, will throw himself away if you do not marry him. Listen to my words, child, for you are weaker than I thought, and I must rule where I would prefer to persuade—if ever you marry Collins, from that hour this house is shut against you."

The tears of Caroline flowed faster. Mr. Warren, after a turn or two across the room, softened again, and addressed her in kinder tones—

"My child," he said, "I speak thus for your own good. I know, if you marry Collins, that you will regret it, and I would, by interdicting it, spare you much future sorrow. I will never urge you to unite yourself with any man you do not fancy, however excellent I may think him to be; this, I promise you; and, on your part, I shall expect you to give up this acquaintance.

To-morrow I will look for your promise to this effect. Go now, and think of it: I am sure you will obey me."

He stooped down, and kissed her tenderly; and then Caroline, still weeping, rushed from the room.

But was it to think, as her father desired, of her duty?

Alone, in her chamber, she re-called, at alternate moments, the words of her parent and the insidious persuasions of her lover: and alas! the latter had most influence with her.

Caroline was not exactly a weak girl, but she had fallen into a bad set at school, and from it imbibed many hurtful notions of a child's duty to its parents, especially in a case of supposed affection. She had read, not good novels, but visionary romances; and these had strengthened her mistaken ideas. Her present suitor was a handsome, designing libertine, who, knowing her father to be rich, desired to possess the daughter's hand, as, with it, went a large fortune. The finished manners of Collins had easily won her liking, for we cannot call it love, and, imagining herself to be in a similar position to her favorite heroines, she regarded the opposition of her father as oppressive and unreasonable.

That very day her suitor had urged her to elope with him, and she had consented to do so; but her parent's kind expostulation had, now, for a time, shook her purpose. Finally, however, the vanity of being the heroine of a runaway match, as well as her biassed views respecting the supposed injustice of her father, induced her to fulfil her promise; and, at the dead of night, she left her home forever.

We say left her home, for she never had another. Mr. Warren proved true to his threat, and was the more inflexible, because Caroline had eloped, on the very night he had plead so earnestly with her. "She left me with my kiss still warm on her cheek," he said; "she preferred another, and a stranger to me; she treated me, not like her best friend, but like an enemy; and henceforth she is banished from my heart."

Yes! she never again had a home. Her husband took her to a hotel, where they remained for several weeks, hoping daily to receive a summons from her father; but, as none came, they were forced at last to retire to a cheap boarding house. Here, amid indifferent society, Caroline, who had been tenderly nurtured, learned soon to feel acutely the advantages of which she had deprived herself, learned to long for her old home.

If her husband had really loved her, or if she could have continued to persuade herself that her father had been unjust, she might have found some alleviation in her altered fortunes. But her

husband, angry that Mr. Warren was inexorable, now began to punish Caroline for her father's firmness, by neglecting her; and left her, evening after evening, to amuse herself, while he spent the hours at the billiard-table, in the theatre, or with some gay friends over a bottle or two of wine. It was now that Caroline saw the correctness of the judgment, which her father had expressed respecting Collins. She not only soon learned that he was both idle and a spendthrift, but discovered that he was intemperate, passionate, and unprincipled.

Often, when he came home excited by wine, he would address her in the most brutal manner, charging their present poverty on her, or rather on her "niggardly father," as he called Mr. Warren to her face. At last, one night, he returned, in a state of violent excitement, from the gaming table, where he had lost largely; and, finding Caroline weeping, struck her a blow, in a fit of passion, that felled her to the floor, where she lay bleeding.

And this was the end of her dream of romance! Into this life-slavery, into this deep degradation, her vanity had led her! Ashamed to tell the truth and throw herself on her father for protection, she endured, for more than a year, every variety of insult from her husband; her health, meanwhile, consuming away, and her spirits, which had once been so high, utterly broken.

Oh! how often she repented of her folly. How, when she heard of others of her sex forming clandestine marriages, she would shudder, and exclaim—"alas! the chances are they will be yet as miserable as I am. Can they not see, that the man, who persuades them to disobey their parents, shows, in that very thing, a want of principle that promises little for their happiness with him?"

But the cup of her misery was not yet full. She had been married little over a year when her husband left her to visit a neighboring city; and, though she waited his return for long after the promised day, he never came. At last a letter from him was put in her hands; and the missive announced, in the most unfeeling terms, that he had left her forever.

She sank in a swoon, and lay for hours before she recovered. When she regained consciousness, it was to shudder at her condition; for she was penniless, with board for many weeks due, and not a friend on whom she could call for the slightest loan. Suddenly, the parable of the Prodigal Son came up to her memory.

"I will arise and go unto my father," she said, humbly, in the words of that beautiful story; and, with the exclamation, she went forth, to seek her old home and sue for forgiveness, heart broken as she was.

It was snowing fast, but she did not heed it. She had thrown on her bonnet, and a light shawl; but had forgotten to change her thin shoes, or to assume a cloak. The melting flakes penetrated her slight attire, but she hurried on, breasting the wild tempest.

She arrived at last in the proud square where her father lived; and stood, a few seconds after, in front of the house. The window shutters were still open, though twilight had set in, and through the lace curtains the ruddy glow of the fire within shot athwart the stormy night. A sharp pain twitched her in the heart; she felt faint; and, staggering up the steps, just managed to pull the bell, when consciousness deserted her.

The servant who answered the door started and cried out when he saw an apparently lifeless corpse lying on the step, with the fast-falling snow rapidly covering it; and Mr. and Mrs. Warren, who were sitting by the parlor fire, coming out

to learn the cause of the disturbance, staggered to behold, in this emaciated form, their disobedient child.

They took her in, they wrapped her in warm clothing, they laid her in her old bed; but it was all of no avail. She revived just enough to ask their forgiveness, and receive it from them weeping. Then, murmuring blessings on them, she died.

This may be thought a fancy sketch; but it is not. It may be considered an excessive case, it is not that either. Caroline Collins, or Warren, as we would rather call her, was early delivered from her sufferings; and in that, terrible as death may seem to the young and happy, she was blessed. There are others, victims of runaway matches, who drag on an existence so miserable that the grave itself would be a relief.

But, as the Scripture impressively says, "they that sow the whirlwind, shall reap the storm."

## THE TIFF; OR, JEREMY SHORT GIVING IN HIS EXPERIENCE.

"As thistles wear the softest down,  
To hide their prickles till they're grown,  
And then declare themselves, and tear  
Whatever ventures to come near."—HUDIBRAS.

"How are you, my dear fellow?—John, a chair for Mr. Graham—excuse my rising, you see I'm gouty—beefsteaks and bumpers have done it at last, and, though only eighty-seven, I'm really beginning to feel old."

"Sorry to hear it, Jérémy! But you look quite hearty yet. Ah! what have you there?—'Shirley,' I vow—a good novel isn't it?"

"Passable, my good friend, but inferior to 'Jane Eyre.' Caroline Helstone, the principal heroine, is a little angel; but in Shirley herself there's a cross of the devil, I'm afraid. Her husband led a dog's life of it, if the truth was but known. She reminds me of the heroine of that picture—the one over the mantel-piece—'The Tiff,' I call it."

"I have often heard you say, Jeremy, that there was a story connected with it. Tell us the tale."

"Well—stir up the fire—take a cheroot. John, retire till you're called—and now, my dear lad, we'll be as cosy for the rest of the evening, as if we'd just eaten a Thanksgiving dinner, and had had our fill of boiled turkey and oyster sauce. 'Blessed be the man,' as Sancho Panza says of sleep, that first invented turkeys—though to my taste, it would be better if they all ran about, ready boiled, swimming in gravy and oysters. But to my tale.

"When I was about twenty—that was in the year 1783—coteremporaneous, I believe, with your grandfather's marriage—I knew as pretty a girl as ever sewed a sampler on week-days, or carried her prayer-book on Sundays to church.

"Bella Belgrave was the beauty of the district. Her step was like a dryad's might be supposed to be; her eyes were as dazzling as the sun at noon-day; her lips were fragrant as strawberries, and twice as sweet; and her voice—sir, if you could have heard it, you would have fancied that a nightingale had nestled in her throat, or that St. Cecilia herself was come down from heaven. At twenty a man falls in love as naturally as he takes to smoking; and he does both, I suppose, to prove himself full grown. Well, I soon lost my heart to Bella. Nor was my suit hopeless. I am handsome yet, as you see—don't laugh at

me, you young scapegrace—and, of course, I was handsome at twenty. I wrote poetry, too, which won girls' hearts just as a moustache does now; and I had a pretty little fortune: so I was soon the accepted lover of Bella.

"Bella possessed but one fault. She had a deuce of a temper. Now, a little sharpness in a wife occasionally may be very excellent, just to spice the monotony of matrimony, as mustard spices beef; but too much of it is as bad as spilling the contents of a whole pepper-box in your plate, when you had just taken the last bit of what was nice on the table. Not that Bella was what is called quick-tempered—I often wished she had been—for it's better to blow off superabundant steam now and then, than to keep it screwed stubbornly down, till, some day, a grand explosion takes place, that sends everything to kingdom come. Unfortunately, Bella both took offence easily, and then 'nursed her wrath to keep it warm.' She had been so much petted that nothing short of abject slavery on the part of a lover would suit her: and i'faith, I grew tired of it at last, as you shall hear.

"One day I had been singing to her a ballad she had asked me to write to some of her music, when one of her friends came in—a dashing little creature she was—since a great-grandmother, my lad, with three hundred and fifty lineal descendants, egad—and I, as in duty bound, did my best to be agreeable. Scarcely, however, had the visitor gone, when Bella, with a face like a thunder-cloud, began—

"'Mighty sociable you and Alice Green are,' she said, 'I suppose you're half in love with her yet; I always heard you were her most devoted admirer.'

"'Now, Bella,' I said, 'don't be jealous——'

"'Jealous,' she exclaimed, stamping her little foot, while her eyes flashed fire, 'it's time to be jealous, sir, when every pretty face you meet tempts you to neglect me: but I'm not jealous—I'm only ashamed of you, sir.'

"'My dear, lovely creature,' I began again, trying to take her hand. But she jerked it pettishly away.

"'Don't *dear* me,' she broke forth—'you know



you don't love me: you never come here more than once a day, while Harry Saville, whom I dismissed for you—more fool was I—used to be here three times a day, and always dined with us on Sundays.'

"I began to grow red in the face, I assure you, at being thus talked to; but I mastered my rage—you know I'm a meek man, it's because of that I was chosen president of the Peace Society—and said meekly—

"'Bella, dear, don't be foolish! I love you better than all the rest of your sex put together: but you musn't expect me to neglect, nay, insult by my rudeness, every other woman I meet. Once for all, let this be understood between us.'

"Woman's rights were not yet thought of, my boy, and wives were expected to obey their husbands, as nature and Scripture command. I deemed it high time I was asserting my prerogatives; and spoke accordingly.

"'Yes!' I repeated, 'you are unjust: you ask too much, my dear Bella.'

"She made no answer; but sat sullen and sulky. I again attempted to take her hand, and, thinking I had spoken too harshly, used a tone of mild persuasion. But she only replied by jerking her hand away, and removing her chair from me. I expostulated with her; I told her how idle was her jealousy; but, the more earnestly I defended myself, the further she hitched her chair around, until, at last, she brought its back directly against that of mine.

"I now gave up explanations; and sat silent on my part. Her pettishness began to open my eyes. She had always been unreasonably exacting; her vanity forever ran ahead of possible attentions; and the jealousy, thus unjustly entertained, yet continually smothered by her sullen temper, was now finally come to a head. As I stole an occasional glance at her, over my shoulder, I saw no longer any beauty in that sulky face. My love was fast changing to anger. I asked myself why I had submitted so long to her tyranny.

"Yet, fearing that I might be also in the wrong, though unconscious how, I made the last effort, after we had sat for some time in silence, to conciliate her. For this purpose, I threw my hand over my shoulder, and dangling my glove so as to let it playfully strike her head, I said, smiling and speaking gaily—

"'A penny for your thoughts, Bella. Comê, forgive and forget. We've had a very pretty quarrel, now let's make up: you know the making up is always the sweetest part of it.' And, as I spoke, I wheeled my chair around, and would have put my arm around her as of old.

"'Did you ever see a tigress in a fury? If not, you've no idea how Bella looked then. She had been sitting, pouting, pulling at a chain to which was attached my miniature: she now sprang to her feet, her eyes emitting fire like an electric-machine in the dark, and her whole countenance blood-suffused with passion.

"'Unhand me, sir,' she cried, 'how dare you touch me after having insulted me? Leave the house this instant, sir!'

"I had borne a good deal: I was not going to endure any more. I had never dreamed my charmer had such a temper. I replied, haughtily—

"'As you please, Miss: but if I go now, remember I go forever.'

"She became white as death for an instant—I had spoke firmly, and she knew me to be resolute—but directly her face grew redder than ever; and, with a jerk, breaking the miniature from its chain, she cast it, shivered into atoms, at my feet.

"'I discard you, as I discard that,' she hissed between her teeth. '*Never* dare to come here again!'

"My eyes darted lightnings at her: I was, for once in my life, in a towering passion; but I remembered that I was a gentleman, and, therefore, controlling my tongue, I merely bowed low, bade her a good morning, and walked from the house."

"And is that all, Jeremy?"

"All. She repented, the next day, and sent a verbal message to me that she forgave me; but I took no notice of it. *Forgave* me, egad! Yet it was long before I cured myself entirely of my passion. I often found myself on the point of going back to her; but, in such moments of weakness, I called up the vision of her face inflamed with passion, and thought what a precious life I should lead, if my wife was to treat me to such exhibitions every now and then, as I felt, sure Bella would if I married her. She actually did drive her first husband into being a drunkard: but her second was too tough for her; he had buried three wives before, and knew how to manage viragos; he said nothing to her when she got into a passion; and, consequently, in three years she fretted herself to death. And now, my dear fellow, take another cheroot, and I'll ring for coffee."

"And the picture was painted to commemorate your escape?"

"Just so: Wellington has one of Waterloo, and thanks heaven, they say, whenever he looks at it; and, I am sure, I do the same when I regard THE TIFF."

## THE VALENTINE PARTY.

BY MRS. J. Y. FOSTER.

"FAX," cried Sophy, as she burst into my room on the thirteenth of February—"I have such an excellent idea, and you must help me to carry it out!"

"Is that you, Soph? I thought I heard you humming 'Susannah' on the stairs! but you see my hands are wet, and I could not open the door. An excellent idea, is it? Wait till I have done with the napkin, and I will give you the attention the rarity of the occasion merits."

"Now, you are laughing at me, Fanny!"

"Not I, indeed! I'm as serious as a deacon!"

"Yes, with that wicked pucker of the lips—but wait till you see my idea planned and effected, and you shall acknowledge I have some originality." And Sophy seated herself in my easy chair, and fanned her glowing cheeks with her bonnet, although it was still winter. "You know I told you I wanted a Valentine party, and you thought Valentines vulgar and often offensive—but I am not to be put down when I have set my mind on anything—and I am determined to have one, but not in the old way."

"And what may be the *new* way, most original Miss Sophy?"

"Never mind! only trust to my word that they shall be neither vulgar nor personal, and promise me that you will come to-night and help me to write the rhymes, for you know that we cannot get along without you."

"Very well! I will go if the old crazy man who has been making love to me through the window for some days, does not carry me off in the meantime."

"What a funny old soul he is, to be sure! with an orange in each hand—do you know he chased Mary Bell in the street, and frightened her so much that she took refuge in a friend's house; a little while afterward, hearing some noise in the hall she peeped out, and there he was brandishing his oranges! Last Sunday as she came out of church she saw him again, and thinking he was after her, she set off at full speed, upsetting two or three children by the way, and terrifying all around her. But, Fan, have you heard the good news? your eyes say 'no!' Well! then, Arthur is in Boston, and has telegraphed us he will be at home this evening at half-past ten. He had just landed from the steamer."

"Indeed!—you must be very happy!"

"To be sure we are! Ma is in a perfect

ecstasy of delight!—my Valentine party is to be in honor of his arrival—I want him to see a few of his old friends assembled."

"On second thought, Sophy, I do not think I can go to help you to-night."

"You cannot? and why, pray?"

"Father will, perhaps, be alone, and need my services."

"Now what nonsense, Fanny! you really vex me—I'm getting in a tremendous passion; you think I can't see through it all, but I do; you were very willing to go till I told you of Arthur's arrival. My opinion is that you are a pair of simpletons."

Sophy rose, and with a serious face began to tie on her bonnet. "Now, Soph!" I said, in a deprecating tone, "don't be offended, I will go if you wish it—at what hour do you expect me?"

"At five in the afternoon! Disappoint me at your peril! I have a world of things to do!" and she was gone.

I sat down when she had left the room in a perfect tremor. What could possess me? I did not know whether to laugh or cry, Arthur had actually arrived, and was coming home—that was the one thought that filled my mind. Would he return the same unselfish, unaffected being who had parted from us two years before? And *our* parting? every word of that interview was ineffaceably impressed upon my mind. He had then explained to me, for the first time, the position in which he stood. His father had left all his property, which was moderate, to his mother and sister, trusting to his uncle to provide for him. His uncle's will allowed him nothing until he should reach the age of twenty-five, and he was then to go abroad for two years. As he did not wish to encroach upon his mother's income, he had applied himself diligently to the study of the law—had practised it with no small measure of success, and had actually become enamored of red tape and parchment. He spoke of his family's removal to our city, and of the pleasant year he had passed here. He alluded to our acquaintance, and to the favorable impression produced upon him previously by mutual friends. He said it would be pleasant to hear of me when far away—and still more pleasant to hear directly from myself. All this was on the old sofa in the back parlor; the fire burned brightly in the ample grate, and our little grey-hound Kate was

stretched upon the rug. What spell came over me I do not know—but I *do* know that it should have yielded to the influence of those words and that hour. Phebe Clay, (I have always detested the name of Phebe, and shall always dislike the person) Phebe Clay had been speaking to me of Arthur that very afternoon, and had asked me if I did not think his family made an idol of him. I replied that they could not well avoid it, he was so devoted and affectionate a son and brother—that he never allowed any engagement to interfere with the comfort or pleasure of his mother or sister. She then advised me to take care of my heart, for she had heard from good authority that Arthur had a great propensity to flirt—that his manners were insinuating—that he had won more than one lady's heart in the city where he formerly resided, and that the most devoted attentions from him signified nothing; she added that his sister thought no one in the world good enough for him, and much more to the same effect.

I ought to have attached no weight to these representations, but they *did* influence me—and when Arthur asked me to write to him I hesitated. He begged I would give him this proof of my friendship. Knowing the weakness of my own heart I could not bear he should number me among his friends merely—I must be all or nothing; and fearing the pent-up feeling might show itself in some way, I answered him coldly, even lightly. His manner changed—he became serious and distant. Perhaps he could not understand how, if I had any regard for him, I could jest at such a time. So we parted with a light clasp of the hand and a common-place adieu. If he had returned a few moments later, he would have found me in tears and sick at heart. He sailed the next day, and I had not seen him since, not even a letter from him, for Sophy never named him before me except when others inquired for him. To hide my real sorrow I had laughed, and danced, and sung, but had discouraged all serious attentions as far as practicable, and had refused one or two unexceptionable offers. I fancied I had conquered my attachment, and was glorying in my own strength—yet this sudden announcement had completely upset me. I had promised Sophy to go, and I must keep my word, but I would leave long before her brother's arrival.

"Why, Fan!" said Sophy, as she opened the door, "I saw you from the window, and you have such a serious look that I could not help laughing. You are ten minutes after the time too, you—the very model of punctuality," and she put back her pretty little watch, Arthur's gift from abroad, "now if it were I, no one would wonder. You know *my* motto is '*punctuality* is the thief of time' instead of *procrastination*, for I'm sure it runs

away with a great deal waiting on other people. I now make it a rule never to be punctual. The last effort in that way was at your suggestion—I went to Stanley's party at half-past eight, the time Harriet fixed, and I was an hour before any one else. I had exhausted every topic of conversation when the company assembled, and in consequence was stupid the whole evening."

I had laid off my bonnet and mantilla as Sophy said this, and she led the way to a table on which was spread quite a variety of toys, some comical, some pretty. "Here are Harriet and Annie," exclaimed she, as the door opened—"you are just in time, young ladies; let me take your bonnets, and now I shall expect something very droll from you."

"What is to be done?" asked Harriet.

"Why, Sophy is directress and judge," said I, "and each one of us is to select a toy and to write some verses, which we are to submit to her inspection."

"I will not be very severe, girls, never fear," cried Sophia, "but you must do your best."

"Great encouragement," remarked Annie, drily, "what will *you* have, Fanny?"

"I think I will take this bow with two strings, it will just suit my genius."

"And I," added Harriet, "this little mirror; I suppose they are fortunes to be drawn, and you are to be grand Sybil, Sophia!"

"I would rather not tell you just now; what will you have, Annie?"

"This little dumb watch; there's brother George across the street, shall I call him in, Soph? he is the very one for you."

She knocked on the window-pane, and George, who is a good-hearted, jovial young man, came in. We explained the affair.

"Just the thing! young ladies! I will do my best, but I must let you know beforehand," and he struck his knuckles against his forehead, "that I am a little weak in the upper story. But it unfortunately belongs to the family."

"All the better!" returned I, "you will make a charming variety."

"Miss Sophy, you are not going to let these girls write!"

"Indeed I am! that's why I sent for them."

"You will get something very silly, that's all."

This was said to tease Harriet, who reckons herself uncommonly clever, while Annie, who has more real ability, is guided by her sister in almost everything.

"What will you be pleased to select, Mr. Stanley?"

"Let me see—this little tin-cup; Miss Sophy, must it pass for a pint or a quart cup?"

"According to your inspiration—if you have a quart of it, pour it out by all means."

"Thank you, a pint will be draught enough for any one."

We sat in silence a few moments, and glancing round, I could not help laughing to see the contracted brows, and eyes set upon the little toys, at which, I suppose, the muses were to descend and take a look.

"Has been done," said George, "is any one else ready?"

Harriet was the last to conclude, but I knew she was finishing it with care, and that with her it was a serious affair, for she would not risk her reputation lightly.

"Come, George," cried Annie, "read yours first; gentlemen should always lead the way in any difficult undertaking."

"Well, here goes—impromptu lines on a little tin-cup."

To some sprightly young Cadebs I'm *pinting* the way,  
To make himself happy as soon as he may,  
Should his choice of Lucillas be not very ample,  
I'd advise him to turn now to me as a sample—  
No matter how deep, so the opening's small,  
That none, at first meeting, may over know all,  
She must handle you, sir, with no riveting strong,  
But plenty of solder to fasten it on;  
Now this sort of woman, you know, is a treasure,  
But then she's entitled to "measure for measure,"  
And should anything ever induce you to bicker,  
Remember, my friend, you are never to lick her.

"Excellent," said Sophy, when he had concluded, "I'm very much obliged to you, I'm sure. Now, Harriet, let us have yours."

Harriet read in rather a pretending manner—

The mirror of Fate—thou may'st look at me here,  
In which all the traces of Time shall appear;  
If thou'rt young and wilt keep me for many a day,  
I will show thee thy locks shall be sprinkled with  
grey;

The eye shall be dull which so brightly hath beamed,  
The cheek shall be furrowed, the brow shall be  
seamed;

But if doing to all as thou'dst still be done by,  
Be the rule for thy conduct—the light for thine eye,  
Relieving and cheering the poor and faint-hearted,  
Thy look shall be lovely, though youth hath departed.

"It's very good, Hal," said George, "but too serious."

"No! no!" exclaimed we, "let us have all kinds."

Poor little diffident Annie, I saw, had written and effaced two or three times, and could hardly be brought to read her four lines on a dumb watch.

I am a watch, fair lady,  
But I do not go,  
And bear I not resemblance  
To thy last night's beau?

"Capital, Nancy, the best of all—you are quite

the genius of the family," and George glanced provokingly at Harriet.

Mine came next—mere doggerel upon the bow with two strings.

Two strings to your bow!

Oh, no! indeed! no!

If one were worth anything, dear,

If 'twas long, if 'twas strong,

If 'twas tightly tied on,

I'm sure you'd have nothing to fear.

Young ladies are few

Who'd ever take two,

If one would present just to please,

And you always will find

Where two strings are joined

One good one were worth more than these.

Sophy had selected a grey horse, and her lines were very good, indeed they took me quite by surprise.

As you want a nag, you say,  
Here's a prize in Dobbin grey,  
She can gallop, trot or canter,  
Any pace that you may want her:  
If a bachelor you be living,  
Do not grudge the sum you're giving,  
For she'll prove a real racer  
Anywhere that you can place her;  
If to marry nothing loth  
Husbandry may suit you both,  
For as swift as Indian arrow  
She will draw both plough or harrow,  
And to save you lots of trouble  
Dobbin Grey will carry double.

We wrote on until tea-time—then nothing would do but George must stay to tea with us, for his rhymes pleased all but Harriet, who thought them rather careless. At nine o'clock we had finished, thirty in all, and we tied them up in fancy paper with bright ribbons. As the clock struck ten I jumped up—"now, Sophy, I must be off—you are probably glad to get rid of us, for you have been very fidgetty the last hour, and your mother has looked at her watch so often; I wish you a happy meeting with your brother." I said this in as indifferent a tone as possible, but I was really far more nervous than she, and my hands trembled so that I could hardly tie the ribbons.

And resisting every entreaty, I resolutely set off with Frank, who had called for me punctually, as I had desired him.

Under ordinary circumstances I should have been round two or three times during the following day to see if I could be of any service to Sophy, but I did not leave the house. I thought Arthur would certainly call to see us; he was a great favorite with my father, and with old Uncle John. The latter was continually teasing me, and had never forgotten a speech I made when

sorely pressed upon the subject—which was that I cared not a straw for Arthur, and nothing would induce me to marry him. I listened and watched at every ring of the bell. Could any thing have prevented his coming? I had not heard of his certain arrival—but in such a case Sophy would have sent me word, and would have deferred her party. I dreaded meeting Uncle John at the dinner-table, and sure enough as soon as I appeared I was accosted with—"well, my dear little wo-begone niece, has the gentleman you do not care a straw for, come yet?" "Indeed, sir, I do not know." "Ah! I remember! some one has probably told him that nothing would induce you to marry him, and he has no idea of being refused before he has proposed." I could have cried with vexation, and papa said, "are you not well, Fanny, dear?" I muttered something about a head-ache, I should have said heart-ache.

During the afternoon I changed my mind twenty times; sometimes I resolved to go and show Arthur my perfect indifference; then again, I was resolved to remain at home, since he cared so little to see me, I would not place myself in his way. All ended, however, in my being dressed with more than ordinary care, and setting off after my usual time. The party was nearly all assembled, and Sophy accosted me as I entered the room—"why, Fanny dear, you are so late, I thought something must have happened." One glance around convinced me he was not there, whose presence I knew not whether most to long for or to dread. I fell back into a corner and commenced an animated conversation with George Stanley. After some chat, he asked—

"Miss Fanny, have you seen Arthur yet?"

"No, I have not—have you?"

"Oh, yes! he arrived before we left last evening, and I saw him again this morning—he looks uncommonly well, and has actually returned without a moustache!"

"That shows his good sense. Do you know I heard a very distinguished person say that he could not control his repugnance toward a citizen of the United States when so disfigured. He also remarked that when in office, *that* cause alone would sometimes prejudice him against those applying for favors, and the president, of whose cabinet he was the foremost member, had precisely the same feeling."

"Well, I confess I don't like them much myself. But to return to Arthur. He sent beautiful bracelets to Harriet and Annie, and a fine cameo pin to ma. It is a head of Minerva; I proposed to Hal, who might pass for the goddess of Wisdom, you know, to exchange with ma, for Arthur had certainly intended it as a profile of her. But what do you think he brought for me?"

"I can't imagine—a Parisian coat?"

"No, not quite—I wish he had; wouldn't I look famous in one?"

"Irresistible—but what *did* he bring you?"

"Why! I am quite flattered with the compliment paid to my literary taste—he brought me a marble bust of Cicero; I, who could never blunder through his orations. If I were as rich as Arthur I would have staid abroad much longer. But they say an affair of the heart hastened his return—have you heard of it?"

"No," said I, faintly, "what is it?"

"The lady whom he met with on the Continent, is, I believe, a Miss Rushton, of Virginia, handsome and rich. She returned a month or two ago, and I suppose he will soon be off on a visit to her, as he cannot have seen her since he landed."

George little thought how my heart sunk as he carelessly uttered these words; I dreamed not for an instant of doubting the truth of his information, but felt it was too true! and I never knew the depth and strength of my feelings until that moment. What he said further I know not, and he was rallying me upon absence of mind, when Arthur entered the room. I did not look toward him, but I heard his frank, manly voice replying in pleasant tones to the welcome and warm congratulation of friends as they pressed around him. He passed from one to another until he came where I knew his eye rested upon me; once he stepped forward to speak, but I was watching my companion's face as if deeply interested in his words, and Arthur stood still for an instant, and then drew back. Again he came forward and held out his hand.

"Fanny," said he, earnestly, "have you not a word or a smile for an old friend?"

I returned his warm grasp lightly—my fingers were as cold as my words of welcome. Every drop of blood seemed to have rushed to my cheeks, which were scorching; at that moment Sophy came up.

"I want you to look, Fanny, at this handsome dressing-case of Arthur's; he has never used it—it was presented by a lady whose child he saved from imminent danger."

"Do tell us the story," asked Harriet, turning to him.

"Indeed, I cannot now," he returned, "but the lady gave me her friendship, which is far more valuable than the dressing-case." Lightly as Arthur seemed to value this article compared with the lady's regard, to us it was exceedingly pretty—beautifully inlaid and furnished with silver, and we examined it with curiosity.

"Here is a secret drawer, I know," exclaimed Annie, as she touched the spring. The box flew out, and there was a general exclamation. There

lay a tiny jeweled and enameled Geneva watch, and connected with it by a light Venetian chain was a miniature, which all knew at the first glance to be Arthur himself. I could have looked long at the semblance, although I had not dared to raise my eyes to the original. Arthur turned and saw our discovery; he seemed disconcerted for a moment, and then quietly re-placed them, replying to Sophy's question—

"My dear, little, curious sister, they are for a lady if she will accept them. The miniature was taken at the request of a friend, an Italian artist; he presented me with this, and kept a copy for himself. He is the same, Sophy, who painted the beautiful copy of Lucretia I gave you."

Disappointment weighed heavily upon my heart before this, now it seemed piled up and pressed down. I longed to be alone in my chamber that I might throw myself on the bed and find relief in tears—I longed for a mother upon whose sympathizing heart I could rest my aching head. But Sophy's voice summoned me to the table.

"Will you be kind enough, Fanny, to carry this little tray round? There are thirty young persons here, fifteen of each sex. This contains slips of paper numbered from one to fifteen, let each gentleman select one. I will carry this (the contents are the same, you see,) to the ladies, then all will be supplied."

"Will those whose numbers match be called together?"

"No! no! Harriet," replied Sophy, "do not flatter yourself with anything of the kind, if you should chance to get the number of one you admire."

I handed the tray to Arthur in silence—he looked at me with surprise, and said gently—

"I scarcely know you, Fanny, you are so changed."

"Am I?" I replied, coldly, and passed on. When all were served, Sophy assumed an air of great importance as she took her place in the centre of the circle, and the two large trays containing our pretty little parcels were placed before her. By the side of each tray was a box filled with slips of paper similar to those we had distributed. With the right hand she drew from one, and with the left from the other of these receptacles, and calling out, "the lady who holds No. 7 will please to come forward," dear little Mary Bell presented herself with a rosy blush. Sophy glanced at the other hand, and said mischievously—

"Remember those that fate couples now are Valentines, and are expected to be paired for the evening, both in the dance we intend to have, and in the walk home, and who knows but it may be for life. Ah! you need not laugh—stranger things have often happened; and now

the gentleman who holds No. 4 must place himself by No. 7." We all smiled as our bachelor friend Meryton made his bow to Mary.

"There is no knowing, Miss Sophy, what you may do for me," said he, "I have always thought if any one could help me to matrimony, it would be you."

"Then present your partner, if you please, with one of these little parcels. This is the tray from which the gentlemen are to select—the other is for the ladies' choice."

Others were paired in like manner; some of the verses, as on all occasions of the kind, were laughable hits, while others were as amusingly inappropriate.

Frank and Annie were called together. Her package contained a tiny sofa.

Fair lady! fair lady! to thee I resign  
This old-fashioned sofa whereon to recline,  
So tempting it looks that it makes one feel dozy,  
I've thought, with a lover, oh, dear! 'twould be cozy!  
Yet a servant discreet who will be on the watch,  
Who'll never come in without rattling the latch;  
If strangers should enter, you might be, I'm sure,  
At either end seated with aspect demure.

Frank's was a tin grater.

You resemble the horse-radish  
Rubbed against me,  
Which some few partake of  
For dinner or tea;  
And all who have known you  
Must feel no surprise  
That you've brought very often  
The tears to their eyes!  
You are cool, but not icy,  
Are sharp, but not spicy,  
You are waiting for wit,  
And will e'er be a waiter,  
You think you're a great one,  
But I am a grater!

I have forgotten now who was the favored recipient of each, but I will give a few of the rhymes which I can remember. There was a funny little terrapin.

The warmest welcome should be mine—  
Take me and season well with wine,  
And then sit down to sup or dine,  
I'm fit for lords;  
I can crawl into man's affections,  
And should young ladies need directions  
How to bring youths to genuflections,  
Just mark my words.

To reach man's heart the shortest way—  
Surest in this degenerate day—  
Is down his throat—and you may stay  
When once safe in;  
Then quickly learn to dress—ye fair!  
Not your own forms or curling hair—  
But dress—with compliments most rare,  
The Terrapin!

There was another on a gridiron with two fish.  
This gridiron is cel'baey, all here will say,  
On which are two bachelors broiling away;  
They are drying and drying all up they will find,  
Contracting in body, contracting in mind.  
Of a fall in the fire each was so much afraid  
That he would not be taken to please a fair maid;  
But soon every thought will be centered in self  
Then they'll not be worth having, but laid on the shelf.

Another was on a glass toy—a goose in a boat.

I'm afloat! I'm afloat!  
A goose in a boat—  
A sailing over Life's sea;  
Oh! sad is my fate!  
I'm in search of a mate!  
'Tis my only resemblance to thee!

Still another, and on a box of lip-salve.

I ask thee to halve  
This box of lip-salve,  
For the salve though I care not a fig,  
The lip-salve divide,  
Take the salve on thy side  
If thou wilt but present me the lip.

George and Sophy were allotted to each other.  
His prize was a dripping-pan with one of his own rhymes.

Here's a new dripping-pan  
Which for woman or man  
In the kitchen is always found handy,  
'T will hold turkey or pig,  
If they are not too big,  
And for beef, veal or goose 'tis the dandy.  
On the next Christmas day  
'T will afford you fowl play  
When your friends meet to hear themselves toasted,  
But if poultry should strike,  
And a calf's-head you'd like,  
Put your own in the pan to be roasted.

Sophy's was a beautiful toy, a little boy with a bird's-nest.

Run away! little boy, there's no room for thee here,  
Thy bird's-nest I want not—and thee I do fear;  
Thou'st an innocent look, but I am not so stupid,  
I know thee, I know thee! thou naughty boy Cupid!  
Disguised though thou be, thou art Venus's minion,  
And always betraying thyself by thy pinion.  
Run off! else the door I will shut in thy face—  
For thy dear little birds could I find but a place,  
Their wings would shoot forth with a marvelous start,  
And some day I'd find they had flown with my heart.

While Sophy was reading these lines, I looked round in some trepidation; Arthur and myself were the only persons remaining, and before I could think how I would act under the circumstances, we were called upon and obliged to take our places. As I passed Uncle John, he whispered with a provoking smile—"stop, Fanny, let

me arrange your dress; what a pity your Valentine should be one whom you have refused beforehand; now if it had been George Stanley!"

"You have no choice, Fan," said Sophy, "you must take the parcel left and give it to Arthur." I felt vexed with her, and deigned no reply, for I was sure the arrangement was one of her own planning.

"Only a little chair!" exclaimed George, as Arthur opened and read—

I give you this chair  
Of a beauty most rare,  
Nor will I betray by my blushes,  
For no one supposes  
That like little Moses  
Young Cupid lies hid in the rushes.

I could scarcely command myself, yet laughed with the rest, for I must either laugh or cry. One comfort, Arthur was as much agitated as myself from some cause, and this re-assured me. I attempted with trembling hands to open my own package. Soph took it from me and held up a set of pretty tablets for a ball, and then read—

Thou art told by lot, fair lady,  
What thy future fate shall be,  
Gay quadrille, and waltz, and polka,  
All shall be adorned by thee;  
But amid the world's false glitter  
One true heart is all thine own,  
One who loves thee for thy virtues  
And thy gentleness alone.

Should he breathe this pure affection,  
Treat not thou his suit with scorn,  
Though thou hid'st with friendly tablets  
Blushes like the radiant morn.  
Canst thou vow to take upon thee  
All the duties of a wife?  
Not the partner for an evening,  
But the chosen one for life.

I threw down the gift, I am afraid, rather contemptuously.

"Fanny, you are not well!" said some one in my ear; it was Sophy; "I am sure you are feverish, you have such an intense color." Arthur looked at me inquiringly as I replied—

"I am perfectly well; I thought you were going to have a dance, Sophia!"

"So we are," said she, running to the piano, "I intend to play the quadrilles myself, and as you are my Valentine, Mr. Stanley, you will have to turn over the music for me." The rest took their places, and I exerted myself so far as to ask my partner, during the intervals of the dance, some questions respecting his travels. Any one might have thought from our manner we were talking together for the first time. He seemed grave and absent-minded, and I thought with a pang of Miss Rushton; "no matter," said I, to

myself, "I am determined to enjoy the present, even if I have a sleepless night."

From the dance we passed to the supper-table, and afterward a waltz and polka were proposed, but I was resolute to go home.

"Do not trouble yourself, I beg," said I, to Arthur, "Frank will accompany me, and can easily return in time for his partner."

"When was it any trouble, Fanny?" asked he, reproachfully, "besides, have I not the right?" and he passed my hand with decision through his arm.

We walked at least half a square without a word—the streets were deserted, for it was nearly midnight; at last, the silence becoming oppressive, I made some remark I cannot remember what, but he seemed not to hear me. A few minutes afterward he said seriously—

"Fanny, can you tell me what has become of the light-hearted, gentle girl I left in your place? whose spirit was like sunshine to all within its influence, and whose laugh gladdened the hearts of those who listened for it?" As I could not reply, he continued, passionately, "I have *longed* for this moment, Fanny, but I find you changed, how much so I cannot express; I might have known it when you cared so little to see me that you would not wait one half hour last evening after two years of absence!"

"I feared to intrude," I returned, in a husky voice.

"Intrude! were you ever an intruder, Fanny?"

"And yet, Arthur," said I, when I could command my voice, "you made no effort to see us this morning, papa and Uncle John too, who thought so much of you!"

"Could you think so ill of me, Fanny? I was on my way to your house at an early hour, but your Cousin Harry met me and told me you had all gone to Bellevue to spend the day." This was true, for we had intended to go, and I had told Harry so the day before, but the lameness of one of the horses had deferred our visit.

At this moment we reached the door-step, and my heart felt lightened of half its load. As I turned to pass in, Arthur said, "good-night," and held out his hand; mine trembled in spite of all my efforts at self-possession.

"May I come in?" he asked, in a joyful tone, "I have not yet seen your father!" I knew papa had retired, but could I have the heart to tell him so? I turned to enter the front parlor. "No! no!" he cried, "let us go into the *back* parlor," and he opened the door. "Here is the old sofa—take off your bonnet, dear Fanny, and sit down; no! no! just here, close beside me. My heart is so overflowing with happiness this evening that you *must* feel its influence. *There* are the table and your father's chair just as I

have often pictured them, I am sorry there is even a new foot-stool." Kate, who was sleeping before the fire, rose, shook herself, and came toward us; she passed Arthur to welcome me, but something seemed to attract her attention, and she returned to him. In an instant she had recognized him, for she bounded, and whined, and licked his hands.

"Ah! Kate!" he exclaimed, as he caressed her fondly, "at all events *you* are not changed! you remember old friends! Fanny! do you recollect the last evening we sat here? do not turn away and withdraw your hand, dear Fanny, I *must* be heard! If you cannot think of me as I would fain be thought of—and loved, you will say so, gently but firmly. The remembrance of our parting weighed heavily upon me when I was far away, but I thought you were very young, Fanny, and scarcely knew your own mind. Sophy, with the delicate tact of a woman, had long divined my secret, and her letters were full of you; as I received each one I rejoiced to learn your heart was still free, and hope whispered it was mine, or might still become so. Have I been mistaken? is my affection then of no value to you?"

I cannot tell how it all happened, but my head rested on Arthur's shoulder, and my feelings found vent in tears and smiles of happiness.

"But Miss Rushton!" exclaimed I, suddenly.

"Miss Rushton! what put her into that dear little head? Ah! I see it all now! some one has been misrepresenting me to you; Miss Rushton is to be married shortly to one in every way worthy of her, and I have promised to attend the wedding."

It was two o'clock before Arthur tore himself away.

"May I come to breakfast? you know I have not yet seen your father," he said, and I smiled assent. I knew Uncle John was waiting for me in the dining-room, for he never *will* retire while there is any one down stairs, and as I could not face him then, I stole up to my room. I did not close my eyes until day dawned, but my thoughts were all joyful.

Trying not to look too happy, I entered the breakfast-room at the usual hour. Uncle John raised his eyes demurely from the paper—

"Fanny, considering you were up until two o'clock, you look very radiant this morning!"

"Why, what kept you up so late, my child?" asked papa.

"Ask her who came in with her and stayed so late!" said Uncle John, maliciously.

"Why, Arthur, papa," I answered, with a blush, "he wished to see you, and I invited him, or rather he invited himself to breakfast this morning."



“Oh, ho!” cried Uncle John, “brother, you had better look to it—it is very wrong for Fanny to be keeping a young gentleman so late when you know she has already refused him.”

I was so light-hearted I could bear this teasing, and when Arthur entered I was delighted to see how cordially papa welcomed him. About mid-day Sophy came rushing in, and threw her arms round my neck—

“Oh, Fanny, I am so glad! there—you need not say a word—Arthur has not told us, but I know he is very happy. Hadn’t I a famous Valentine party?” She kissed me, and before I could speak or return the caress, she was gone.

I have since taken care to possess myself of the dear little tablets I lightly threw aside, so that the watch and miniature are not my only tokens from THE VALENTINE PARTY.

## THE VALLEY FARM; OR, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ORPHAN.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Charles J. Peterson, as the proprietor, in the Clerk's Office, of the District Court of the U. S., in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36.

WHEN I was about twelve years of age, an uncle whom I had often heard of as having gone to India when a lad, and who had not written home for years, suddenly made his appearance at the old farm-house.

He had amassed a competence, and was now returned to enjoy it. As yet, however, he had formed no plan of life; but, after being in the valley about a month, he announced his intention to set up an establishment in the city, and almost in the same breath asked my Aunt Sarah to preside over his household.

It was accordingly determined that she should leave the old homestead, and that I should accompany her. It was not my uncle's intention, at first, to invite me; in fact he had scarcely noticed me, for he disliked children, and I was at that age when girls are at once ugly and shy; but when my aunt informed him that she had engaged to protect me, and could not accept his offer unless I went with her, he assented as of course. So we went to town, where my uncle took a house, and where a new world opened to me.

My uncle was my mother's brother, and, therefore, connected only by marriage with my Aunt Sarah. We had now been living in the same house about six months, before the nearer relationship existing between himself and me appeared to break upon him for the first time; and he began to take some notice of me. Perhaps also I was growing prettier. One day he met me in the hall, just as I entered from school, flushed with exercise, and looking happy, for I had that day been raised to the head of my class.

"Come here, Mary," he said, looking at me earnestly; then placing me between his knees before him, he took out his spectacles, wiped them, carefully adjusted them, and scrutinized me. I blushed. "Why I declare," he said, at length, "how much you look like your mother! It never struck me before. Strange. Yet what a resemblance! It seems as if I saw my poor sister," he continued, soliloquizing, "as she used to be when we were children together. God bless you!"

He took off his spectacles to wipe them, for

the tears were in his eyes. From that hour I loved the old man.

We soon grew to be great friends. I used to have his slippers and dressing-gown ready for him, when he returned toward evening, and would wheel his morocco covered arm-chair to his corner before the grate; he would allow no one else to do these things. But stay, I have not described him.

My uncle was now about sixty, rather tall, inclining to corpulency, and with a head of the whitest and thickest hair I think I ever saw. It was a crown of glory to him, that mass of snowy hair. His manners were of the old school, very formal, but a little spoilt by his long residence abroad. He was a bachelor, and, therefore, precise, with a tendency to be self-willed, but he had an excellent heart. Having read much, and thought more, and in addition having travelled over half the world, he was a most entertaining companion, and his society was courted very generally. He was fond of chess, but I rarely saw him play at home, and then only when he had some old friend to dine with him. I have heard, however, that he spent half his mornings at a public library and reading room, where three or four grey-headed chess-players like himself would meet to contest a game, or watch others at it.

As he had retired from business, and invested his fortune, he never engaged in any mercantile affairs; but he loved to talk about the scarcity of money or its reverse, the prospect of trade, the price of government sixes, the rise or fall of cotton, and the arrivals from Canton. Of mornings he divided his time between the exchange and the reading-room I have mentioned. He was a heavy stockholder and director in an insurance company, whose business chiefly lay with the East India fleet; and, when he had no other place to lounge in, he used to go to the office and talk over the commercial and monetary world with his brother directors, retired old merchants, most of them, such as himself. He liked a good cigar after dinner, and a glass or two of old Madeira; and his breakfast was never complete

without the —, a newspaper which his father had taken before him, and which, though now the most stupid of journals, he regularly read through, advertisements and all.

He had no liking for the country. He had left it when a boy, and had never returned to it, so that the life of a town had become part of his nature. I used to walk out, in the spring and autumn afternoons, with some of my schoolmates into the fields and woods without the city, and return at evening laden with wild flowers; but this was a taste he could never comprehend; and I think I hear now his "pooh! pooh! what can you do with such trash!" as he turned from his book or paper, when I would lay my treasures on the centre-table. He liked the smell of cordage better than that of the freshest field of hay ever made fragrant by sunshine; and the spectacle of a ship in full sail he was accustomed to declare the finest sight in the world. He had, on the mantel-piece of his chamber, an ivory frigate in a glass-case; and all sorts of curiosities, from a gilded Chinese god down to an enormous hookah, were scattered about the apartment. He was proud of what he called the unmixed blood of his family, and had brought back with him from Canton a porcelain breakfast service, with our coat of arms, and motto upon it: and sometimes, when he had indulged in an additional glass of wine, or his heart was thawed from other causes, he would talk proudly of the day when his grandfather lived in Boston, before the revolution, and was three out of the four gentlemen there who drove his carriage. "The son of an earl," he would say, "but I am prouder of him, because he lost his all in the cause of his country, than for even that, sir."

At sixteen I was no longer an awkward, ugly girl, but, if I trusted what was told me, quite pretty. I remember my astonishment the first time the consciousness of my improved looks burst upon me. It was one afternoon when coming home from school. The day was warm, and I was nearly at our door, so, with girlish indifference, I took off my bonnet, and began fanning myself with it. It was a large Leghorn — what was then called a flat — and answered the purpose of a fan admirably. My color was heightened by exercise, and my curls were blowing carelessly about. Suddenly one of two gentlemen passing, exclaimed — "by Jove, what a little beauty!" I was in a nervous tremor in an instant. Remember that up to this time, I had never been praised for good looks, but always been abused for awkwardness. No wonder I was frightened, astonished, that my breath left me. I hurried home with a beating heart, ran up to my room, and looked at myself eagerly in the glass. But it was a long time before I could

persuade myself that I was really prettier than my schoolfellows, so thoroughly had oppression and neglect in my early years impressed a humble opinion of myself on me. It required many a look of admiration in the street, and many a direct compliment to convince me of it, nor was I thoroughly persuaded until one day my uncle, looking earnestly at me through his spectacles, said at last, "well, I do believe, Miss Sarah, that Mary is growing pretty."

The last year I went to school I began to have a reputation for wit. I think now that my partial friends over-estimated me, and that a certain gaiety of spirits, joined to a facility in conversation won me the name of a *bel esprit*; but it is certain that wherever I went, I obtained this character; and often, when I was not known to be near, I overheard my aunt and uncle conversing about my smart sayings, and laughing at them. Once or twice my uncle complimented me on them, but at such times my aunt gave him a look of reproof, and at last finding this did no good, said — "how can you indulge the vanity of the child, brother: you will ruin her immortal soul!" My uncle, at this, shrugged his shoulders: but he never afterward flattered me.

If I had not received such severe lessons of humility in earlier life, or if my aunt had not even now sought frequent occasions to mortify me, I might have been spoiled in the two years that followed my coming out. Between sixteen and eighteen I lived in an incense of flattery. I was almost constantly out of evenings, at a party, at a concert, or at some other resort of pleasure. Even had I been less observing, I could not have failed to notice that few girls of my age received so much attention. Bouquets were constantly being sent to me. I generally had half a dozen invitations for the first opera of the season, for I was passionately fond of music, and had the credit of being a superior amateur performer, which after all is not much praise. Everybody thought me supremely happy. Alas! I was not. I saw my companions loving and beloved, but, among my numerous admirers, there was not one to whom I could attach myself. And yet I felt the need of loving, oh! how acutely. An orphan and alone in the world, I had never had one on whom I could pour out the secret hoards of my affection, but had pined for such a one, a mother, a sister, or a father. Ah! how I longed for some one who could be solely mine. Like most others of my sex, whose sympathies were acute, I felt it necessary to my happiness to love. Yet I saw no one who awoke more than a passing interest in me.

There were some indeed who seemed at first to approach my ideal of true manhood, but they all disappointed me bitterly on a closer acquaintance.

They whom I had believed high-minded turned out calculating. The apparently intellectual proved common-place. The seeming virtuous were found to be dissolute. In short, my dreams of perfectability were dissipated daily; and in the end those whose society I began with welcoming, I ended with spurning.

I gradually obtained, by these means, the name of a coquette, yet nothing was further from my nature. Often I asked myself if I was ever to love. I feared that I had pitched my ideal too high. Yet I felt, much as I longed to love, that I could not compel myself to love; and I shuddered when I thought of a long life dragging slowly along, without any closer ties of affection, until finally, as years advanced, I should harden into a cold-hearted automaton like my Aunt Sarah.

With these feelings I gradually found my affections twining closer and closer around my uncle. I still loved my aunt, at least in a measure; but I loved him more. And yet, kindly as he was, there were many things about him certainly not attractive to a young girl. I did not understand then why I could never make a confidant of him, why there was something in my bosom that checked the gush of my affections beyond a certain point; but I do now. How could two natures so dissimilar as ours ever approach closely? It could not be.

One day my uncle came home in unusually good spirits.

"Mary," he said, patting me on the head, his habit when pleased, "I have a husband for you—a fine, handsome fellow, and as rich as Cræsus—the son of an old merchant I knew in the Indies, so that there is no mistake about his wealth—he will be here this evening, and you must dress in your best."

"Indeed," I answered, "I shall do no such thing. A pretty affair, to be getting myself up for exhibition, like a Chinese bride. Mr. Somebody must take me as he finds me."

I said this playfully, but I was in earnest nevertheless. My uncle had lived so long in the east that he considered our sex a merchantable commodity, to be disposed of to the highest bidder.

He shrugged his shoulders, and looked piteously at my aunt, as much as to say, "what foolish notions the child has!"

My uncle's protégée came, punctual to his appointment. He was a remarkably gentlemanly looking person, and would generally have been considered handsome. He dressed with unusual taste for one of his sex. My uncle introduced him as Mr. Thornton. The manners of this new acquaintance were easy, and what the world calls high-bred; his conversation was intelligent,

varied, and even entertaining; and, moreover, he seemed struck with my appearance from the first moment of his entrance, and paid assiduous court to me. All this might be supposed to be not without its effect on a girl of seventeen. But it did not move me.

I admired him, however; but my heart was untouched. And I startled both my uncle and aunt by saying as much after he had gone.

"Confess now, Mary," said my uncle, rubbing his hands when our guest had departed. "Confess now that Mr. Thornton is a more interesting visitor than you had expected. I must compliment you on your conquest. You little jade, to tell me you did not intend to dress handsomely! I never saw you look so well as in that white dress, with the moss-rose bud in your bosom. Well, he is worth the trouble of catching. A quarter of a million—not a cent less. Been to Europe too, danced with Queen Victoria, and dined with the Emperor Nicholas."

I smiled.

"What are you smiling at, you little hypocrite?" he said, pinching my ear. "Don't try to persuade me you are not determined to secure this prize. I could see how adroitly you angled for him. How you chatted, and laughed with him. Own the truth now; is he not a splendid fellow?"

"Since you give me a chance at last to speak," I said, laughing, "I will tell you frankly what I think of him."

"Ah! that is right," said my uncle, rubbing his hands.

My aunt smiled approvingly.

"He is thought handsome, I suppose," I continued, "but I do not consider him so——"

"Not handsome!" cried my uncle, bouncing up out of his chair.

"Not handsome!" cried my aunt, dropping her work into her lap.

"No, his face wants character—and so does his conversation. In a word, though handsome, rich, well-educated, and improved by travel, he is decidedly common-place. It is lead, well gilded indeed, but only lead after all."

My uncle looked at me sharply, and a frown gathered on his brow; then he turned to my aunt and said—"the deuce take the girl and her nonsense!"

My aunt lifted up both her hands, and ejaculated piteously—

"Mary—I never!"

I could not avoid a hearty laugh, to see them both so ludicrously bewildered.

Neither of my hearers appeared to relish my merriment, which was, perhaps, a little rude. My uncle looked grave, and, after a moment's silence, said—

"I tell you what, you minx, you read too many novels. I suppose you have the Children of the Abbey by heart."

"I never read the book," I said.

"Never read it!" exclaimed my aunt, surprised out of her discretion. "Why, Mary, that cannot be! I had read it half a dozen times before I was your age—the more shame to me," she hastily added, remembering herself.

"The girl always speaks truth, I will say that for her," said my uncle, with grave displeasure. "But I'll engage she has read Thaddeus of Warsaw, The Scottish Chief, and all that trash."

"She had better read Dunallan; or, The Lady of the Manor," interposed my aunt, parenthetically.

"I have never perused any of the novels you mention," I said. "I have read most of Scott's, and find others not interesting enough. I would rather read a good fairy tale than the stuff you name."

"Humph!" said my uncle. "You set up for a critic, do you, with your other nonsense? Let me tell you, Miss Pert, that when I was young, the novels you call 'stuff' were considered remarkable."

"Dunallan is worth all Scott ever wrote," ejaculated my aunt.

"Well, uncle," I said, going up to him, putting my arm around his neck, and kissing him first on one cheek, then on the other, "don't let us quarrel about our favorite writers! And now I'll acknowledge, if that will please you, that Mr. Thornton is a very nice, conversible young gentleman, and I'll treat him well, when he comes here, if it's only for your sake."

My uncle always thawed when I kissed him after this fashion. He drew me to his knee, and said, patting my cheek—

"That's a good girl now. And, by and bye, you'll treat him well, I hope, for your own sake; for it rests with you," he added, seriously, "whether to be Mrs. Thornton or not."

I did not care to renew hostilities by saying what I thought; but I made a mental reservation to be guided by circumstances.

My aunt smiled, and took up her knitting.

From that time Mr. Thornton became a constant visitor at the house; but I cannot say he gained in my opinion. Let me be understood! I esteemed him more and more every day, for he had a hundred excellent qualities; but I did not love him.

I had hit the truth the very first night I saw him. Women have an instinct, in those matters, I believe. Thornton wanted character. He was a man of good abilities, could talk well, had wandered over the whole range of modern literature, and even made some pretensions to authorship in

an amateur way; but there was nothing original in his mind, or forcible in his character. He might have suited a thousand women more accomplished than myself: he did not suit me.

"Why don't you do something?" I said to him one evening, for I had learned to talk to him with the frankness of a sister.

"What shall I do?" he said, "you have only to command me, and I obey."

"Oh! that is not it," I replied, carelessly running my fingers over the piano, for I had been playing from Beethoven, but noticing that he was not listening, had stopped to ask my question. "You ought to know best what you would like to do."

"Well, then," he said, "I like to do nothing. I am rich, and have no motive to work. I had rather dawdle along, enjoying life."

"Dawdle!" And I laughed. Then, turning around on the piano stool, I looked him full in the face, and said—"do you know it seems so odd to me that any man should prefer loitering idly through life—dawdling, as you call it—to action. Why, were I a man, I should die of *ennui*, if I had nothing to do. Without some purpose in life, life itself is not worth having. Be a politician," I exclaimed, wheeling back to my piano, "if you can be nothing better." And I began to play vigorously at Beethoven again.

When I had concluded, I looked up. My lover was still standing at my side, and with a deprecating look.

"Do you really wish me to be a politician?" he said, in a low voice.

I blushed to my temples. If I answered in the affirmative, he might take it for encouragement. Honesty compelled me to speak frankly.

"Not unless you like it, Mr. Thornton," I said. "And I should be sorry if you did like it," I added.

"You're a strange creature, Miss Lennox," he said, "you first tell me to be a politician, and then say you would be sorry to see me one."

"Well, I mean," I replied, "that a politician, even if successful, is never sufficiently compensated for his exertions. He coins his heart's life away to purchase dross."

Thornton stared at my enthusiastic expression, so that I blushed again. "Pray, tell me what you wish," he said, "and don't be quizzing a poor fellow."

On this I recurred to my first remark, and explained myself more fully. The truth was, I wanted to return Thornton's love, if I could. I pitied him. Besides, seeing how my uncle desired the match, I was determined, if possible, to gratify him. But I could not love a man who dawdled through life. I wanted this error corrected: then, perhaps, I could consent to be his wife.

"Politicians," I said, looking up earnestly at him, "stoop to such tricks, and so constantly, that their moral sense, not to say their honor, becomes impaired. But there are other pursuits, I am sure, in which a man of fortune can engage, with pleasure to himself, and profit to his race."

"I never liked the law," said my lover, as if in a tone of inquiry. "It is too late to enter the army or navy. I'm sure I don't know what a man, in my situation, could do, if he would."

"I have read," I said, and I felt my cheek kindling with enthusiasm as I spoke, "of men—John Howard was one—who, laying aside the luxuries of their station, suffered privations, pecuniary losses, and even disease that they might relieve those lying in prisons, and carry comfort to the sick and miserable. I have read of others—Xavier among them—who have sacrificed rank, country, even family ties; exiled themselves to distant and even inhospitable realms; suffered hunger, fever, abuse, and died at last alone and unassisted; and all that they might proclaim in other realms the religion in which they believed. I have read of men—rich and luxuriantly nurtured—who have languished in miserable dungeons, or perished on the scaffold for opinion's sake, when, by remaining in quiet at their comfortable homes, they might have lived to eighty in possession of wealth and rank. I have read of still others—born in the lap of ease—who have toiled, night and day, unintermittingly, like Wesley, or Whitfield, to preach salvation to the poor—"

I broke off for want of breath. Thornton had, at first, colored at my indirect reproof; but latterly he had gazed at me with astonishment. Now he spoke.

"You would not have me turn minister—would you?" he said, in amazement. "Why, I thought—excuse me—but I did not know you were religious."

"Nor am I, I am afraid," I answered, gravely. "But you don't seem to understand me, Mr. Thornton; so we had better change the subject."

I closed the piano as I spoke, and rose. My momentary feeling of enthusiasm had subsided, and I felt almost ashamed for having betrayed myself to one who could not comprehend me, but only thought me odd. This conviction, perhaps, gave something of coldness to my tone.

Thornton himself followed me across the room to the sofa, where I now retired. He was too well-bred to allude to a subject which I had desired might be waived; but he obviously thought me offended, and strove, by his apologetic manner, to make peace with me.

The next evening, however, he managed to acquaint me, though with a humble, deferential air, as if not certain that I would be pleased,

that he had subscribed to two of the principal philanthropic institutions of the day. The subscription, I afterward heard, was a munificent one.

And this was his comprehension of my meaning! I wished him to become a man of action, for I could not love one who did not play his part somehow, and with credit, in the great drama of life; and he thought I only desired him to give money to benevolent societies, money that he could well spare, and which it was scarcely a merit for him to bestow.

Was I not right when I said he wanted character? And yet he was the kindest, best-hearted lover I had ever had, and withal the most well-bred. He was the most intelligent also, though he did not show to advantage in conversations like the above: he was too humble as a lover for this; with others he acquitted himself more creditably.

There was a continual struggle in my mind whenever he was present. I did not wish to encourage him, and yet I shrank from giving him pain. And when I did treat him coldly, my uncle or aunt was always ready to soothe him by some delicate piece of attention, and thus secretly induce him to renew his suit. Not that he ever offered himself to me in words. Had he done this, I should have refused him, and in language that could not have been mistaken. But every day saw the choicest bouquets on my table, the newest poem, the latest periodical, Landseer's last engraving, or some other novelty, and all the gift of Thornton.

These silent, assiduous attentions continued for more than a year. I would have been utterly insensible if they had not produced their effect. Thornton bore too with all my whims, and so patiently and forgivingly, that my heart must have been harder than steel not to have melted from its first indifference.

Warm and impulsive, I was also wayward, and often in the wrong. Sometimes, irritated at his pertinacious attentions, I was pettish, even rude to him, but he never revenged himself on me. A glance of mingled surprise and reproof would beam on me from his eyes; but that was all. Devotion that continued thus unchanged, in spite of injustice and rebuffs, had its effect at last. I began with pitying him, and eventually believed that I might yet love him.

What increased this growing conviction was the fact that though I was now eighteen, and had new admirers every season, I saw no one, among them all, who could compare with Thornton. He was as infinitely superior to the butterflies of fashion that hovered around me, as my ideal had been superior to him. But I began to think that this ideal was an impossibility, and that, as my uncle said, I was a visionary.

And yet, at times, how the thirst for some loftier spirit to strengthen and uphold my own in the great battle of life, would seize me. Oh! how mean and petty seemed the aim of the common herd, at moments like those. What it was that I sought, I scarcely knew. It was not solely the world's applause; for mere earthly ambition palled me. It was "the desire of the moth after the star."

I felt this most when alone, at the deep hour of midnight, or when walking in the woods or fields. The contemplation of the boundless firmament, with its worlds on worlds wheeling forever in endless orbits, affected me with an awe indescribable, and a longing to be freed from my clayey fetters and roaming far away among those starry spheres. The rustling of summer leaves; the gurgle of waters; the thousand flowers smiling on hill-side and in valley filled my soul with dreams of supernal beauty, which sometimes visited me, as it were, like reminiscences, and sometimes as freshadowings of a better land yet to come. From such fevers of the imagination, I would come back dissatisfied with my lot, and most of all with my lover.

But these deliriums became fewer and fewer. The kindness, the devotion of Thornton subdued me more and more, until, at last, I mentally resolved to hold out no longer, but make him and my uncle happy.

I now received his attentions with more composure. No longer checked by my fits of displeasure, he grew more attentive. My uncle smiled and rubbed his hands; and my aunt began to think of the wedding dresses.

Do not blame me, reader, until you have heard all! A great crisis in my life was at hand.

We were at a watering-place for the summer, not Saratoga, nor the White Sulphur, but one of those quieter resorts, where, though there is less fashion, there is always more real enjoyment.

A camp-meeting was to be held in the vicinity. I had often heard of these assemblages, but had never seen one, and accordingly expressed my desire to go. My aunt shook her head; my uncle, however, laughed an assent. Thornton offered to accompany me. Finally it was agreed that my aunt, Thornton and myself should take a carriage after dinner, drive to the camp-ground, remain until after the evening service, and then return.

During the journey my spirits were in a joyous flutter. I never had felt more exhilarated, or with less apparent cause. I was gay, I laughed, I did a hundred unaccountable things. But, as we drew near the ground, my feelings suddenly changed. I grew sad. My depression was such that I almost shed tears. Was it a premonition of my destiny?

The B—— Springs are high up among the mountains, as all who have been there know. The camp-meeting was held in a grove, on a mountain-side, in one of the most picturesque situations possible. Unlike such assemblages on the Atlantic sea-board, where the dense population of a great city is usually at hand to create disorder and make a mock of religion, the camp-meeting at B—— was attended principally by those who came to worship God after the fashion of their fathers. The audience was composed mostly of illiterate hearers, but serious, earnest and even enthusiastic in their religious views. The preachers had been collected from the surrounding counties, and those were generally preferred who had the greatest reputation for eloquence. Among them was the Reverend Mr. N——, whose impassioned style a service of thirty years in the ministry had not softened, but who still possessed, among his brethren, the name of a Boanerges, and was said to have been the means of converting more souls than any member of the conference. It was, because he was announced to preach that we had chosen this particular afternoon to visit the camp.

The evening closed in while we were still a mile from our destination. As our horses toiled up the mountain road, suddenly, on a point high above us, I saw a light stream up, like a beacon, into the twilight sky.

"There is the camp-ground," said Thornton, pointing with his whip toward the light. "You know, I suppose, that at night these places are lit up by a fire of pine-knots."

I did not know it, I said, but thought the effect must be very picturesque.

"It is," said Thornton. "The flashes of light, rising and sinking as the fuel is increased or burns out; the play of the fires on the faces of the spectators; the strong glare within the circle of tents and the darkness beyond: all give a wild, lurid effect to the scene indescribable. But hark! The services have begun—don't you hear the singing?"

Clear and high the strain rose up, then sunk mellowed by the distance, and then again, borne on the night air, came audibly to our ears. The hymn was one of those wild, passionate ones, in which the hearts of the people, when stirred by some deep enthusiasm, find vent. The music was a chaunt, rather than a harmony. As it rose and fell it had an almost unearthly effect. The hymn, as far as I could distinguish its meaning, by the snatches of words I caught, depicted the terrors of the judgment seat, where families would be torn asunder, fathers from children, wives from husband, brothers from sisters, these to wailings unutterable, those to eternal glory. I remember one stanza—

"Fathers and children there shall part,  
Fathers and children there shall part,  
Fathers and children there shall part,  
Shall part to meet no more."

A little while after, as we drew nearer, a still more unearthly cadence rose across the darkness.

"Oh! there will be wailing,  
Wailing, wailing, wailing—  
Oh! there will be wailing  
At the judgment seat of Christ."

The night was so gloomy that we could only see our way by the fitful glare of the pine-knots burning in the distant camp, and as the road wound around the mountain this wild light continually appeared and disappeared. Through the almost pitchy darkness that thus occasionally enveloped us, when a single false-step would have plunged us sheer down a precipice hundreds of feet high, the burden of this strain, and the prolonged cadence with which the unseen congregation sang, "wailing, wailing, wailing," made me shiver nervously.

Suddenly the hymn ceased, and silence followed. The congregation was at prayer, and we could not hear the single voice that led the petition. Occasionally, however, a cry of heart-felt anguish, or a shout of rejoicing rose on the night.

We reached the camp-ground before the prayer was over. Thornton tied the horses to a tree outside the circle of tents, and, giving each of us an arm, we entered the (to me) strange scene.

Right in the heart of the primeval forest, beneath giant trees that had weathered the storms of a hundred years, and on ground where not a particle of undergrowth was found, the camp had been pitched. A circle of tents, about two hundred feet in diameter, enclosed a space occupied almost entirely with rude unplanned benches. A stand, or sort of open shed, at the head of the circle, faced these benches, and was used for a pulpit. This stand was now occupied by about half a dozen ministers. Immediately in front of it was a space railed off for an altar. Four huge platforms stood at regular distances around the camp, filled with blazing pine-knots, which threw a lurid flame over the white tents, the tall trees, the preachers' stand, and the faces of the congregation upturned to the speaker.

We took our seats. The whole scene, so strange, so wild, affected me indescribably. The minister who was to address the audience had just risen. Let me describe him.

He was about fifty years of age, with a person and face that reminded me forcibly of the portraits of John Bunyan: the same massy brow, the same dreamy eye, the same fixedness of purpose in the expression of the mouth, and the same rough, almost burly form. He wore a

black coat, cut with a square collar, such as we see in pictures of Wesley, and other early Methodist divines. His cravat was white, and he wore no shirt collar.

The first sound of his sonorous voice made me start. Never had I heard such a voice. It rang out, through the deep aisles of the forest, like a trumpet, yet, with all its volume, it was strangely musical: and he held it entirely under his control. In its accents of persuasion the softest female voice could not be sweeter; but when denunciatory, its tones were like those of low, hoarse thunder.

Before he gave out his text he paused, with his hand on the Bible before him, and looked slowly around the assembly. I know not how others felt, but there was a magnetism in his eye, as it met mine, that bowed my soul before him. He must have exercised the same influence on most others, for a profound hush fell on the congregation, so that I heard distinctly the deep breathing of my neighbors.

When he had, by a look, produced this breathless silence, he gave out his text, a sermon in itself:—"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul."

He read these words impressively; then waited a full minute, during which his eye wandered, as before, magnetically around the assembly; and then he read them again. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul."

Never had I heard such a sermon as that which followed; and old men, who had been members of the society since their youth, and who had listened to Summerfield himself, said the same. It seemed to me as if I heard an apostle, or at least one divinely commissioned. Mere human eloquence could certainly never soar so high.

I shall not attempt to describe that sermon. Language would fail me. Yet my memory of it is distinct. The various positions which he assumed, as if carelessly, and to which he gained a ready assent; the masterly manner in which he next gathered them up in succession, and rapidly welded them into one irresistible argument; the enthusiasm with which he fused the whole mass; and finally the almost miraculous power with which he poured the living, burning, consuming torrent on the hearts and consciences of his hearers:—how can I ever forget it!

The climax would, at any time, have been terrible, but was rendered more so by a thunderstorm which arose. All through the evening the clouds had been darkening overhead, and occasionally a huge drop of rain would patter to the ground; but so absorbed was the congregation in the sermon, that no notice was taken of these signs of a coming tempest. As the speaker



approached the conclusion of his address, the thunder began to bellow in the distance, and now and then a flash of lightning threw a ghastly glare over the faces of the assembly. But, with the rising storm, the power of the orator rose also. He began to depict the day of judgment, according to the tenets of his sect: I may say of almost all sects, for the mass of every denomination favors sensual pictures of that dread trial-scene. He described a summer morning, in a wealthy, crowded and gay city; the streets thronged with traffic; splendid equipages rolling along; ships putting out from the wharves; merchants counting their gains or forming plans for the future; the courts filled with suitors, lawyers and judges; and a bridal procession going to church, with smiles on every face, and the vista of a long and happy life opening before the youthful pair. So vivid was the imagination of the speaker, and so graphic his words that the scene seemed to be realized by all, when suddenly a sharp and terrific clap of thunder broke over our heads. All heard the stunning sound, but before they could comprehend what it was, the orator cried—"hark! the trumpet sounds—the voice of God is abroad—lo! in the midst of feasting, the great day of judgment breaks upon the world."

The effect was electric. Carried away by the scene he had conjured up, the vast congregation, momentarily believing that they did indeed hear the trumpet of the last day, rose, almost to a soul, with a wild shriek from the benches. In that wild shriek were mingled cries for mercy, shouts of mortal agony, and rejoicing hallelujahs. Before the effect could wear off, the flood-gates of heaven opened, and the rain descended, not in a shower, but in a deluge. The fires of pine-knot went out, and all was darkness. Yet, through the gloom, there rose up that awful, and now prolonged cry from the vast multitude, mixed with the sound of the rushing rain. Soon a vivid gush of lightning made everything for a moment as light as day, and revealed, with its ghastly glare, the faces of the congregation, each under the influence of a different, but overpowering emotion, fear, hope, despair, rapture, agony unutterable, bliss beyond human language to describe. The flash passed, and all was again darkness. Yet, through the gloom and uproar, was still heard the voice of the preacher, no longer exhorting, but now crying incessantly, like one from the dead:—"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Suddenly my aunt grasped my arm. "This is horrible," she said, "let us go." Thornton rose at the same moment, saying—"we shall be wet through." I had but to obey.

We groped our way along the benches, and finally reached the rear of the circle. Here a faint light, streaming from the back of the tents, which were generally open, guided us to our carriage, of which shelter we hastened to avail ourselves.

"Had we not better wait till the storm abates?" said Thornton.

"No, no," cried my aunt, impatiently, "these awful sounds will drive me crazy. Besides it may rain till midnight."

Thornton made no reply, but unfastening the horses, led them out into the road, and then took his seat silently in the carriage.

We drove for about a quarter of a mile in profound silence. The road was just distinguishable, and that was all, being known from the surrounding rocks, by its grey color. At last, it entered the forest again, and now we could not see the horses' heads. The way ran along side the precipice continually. Our peril was imminent. The horses trod slowly and cautiously, as if sensible of the danger, their ears pricked to catch the slightest sound.

All at once I noticed a faint light ahead. It moved steadily along, at about the height of a man from the ground.

"What is that?" I said, pointing to it.

"I know not," replied Thornton, in a whisper. "It can't be an ignis fatuus."

As he spoke, the horses started suddenly aside, snorted with affright, and then sprang forward at full gallop.

My aunt shrieked. Thornton himself uttered a cry of terror. As for me I was speechless with horror, for I expected to be plunged down the precipice.

Not much time, however, was given to thought, when the horses were seized by some unseen, but powerful arm, which, after almost throwing them back on their haunches, brought them to a stop. The shock nearly flung us from our seats.

"Wo—hoa," said a deep voice from out the darkness, "be still, won't you? Wo—hoa—there—be quiet now—wo—"

A flash of lightning, at this crisis, revealed the speaker, and the entire scene to us.

Right on the edge of a precipice, so profound that the tops of the gigantic pines below were on a level with him, stood a tall and powerfully built man, attired in a rough shooting-dress, and smoking a cigar. With both hands he held our horses by the heads, and pushed them back from the abyss. A single glance sufficed to show that his vigorous arm alone had saved us from death. All this the lightning revealed, and then darkness followed.

"Sit still," said the stranger, "and I will back the horses into the road again. I know every

inch of ground here. There is no more danger if you remain quiet."

The rain was still pouring down. We could hear it running in torrents on the mountain side, and tumbling over the sheer precipice in front of us. At every step of the horses the water splashed over the front seat.

"There," said the stranger, at last, "you are in the road again. It is as dark as a wolf's mouth, however, and unless you know the way as well as a man knows the road from his chamber to his study, you may get astray again. Have you no lamp to your carriage? Few people, in this neighborhood, travel without lamps."

I recollected that there was a lamp, and wondered now that we had not thought to light it, before we left the camp. I whispered as much to Thornton, who told the stranger.

"Sit quiet, then," he answered, "and hold your horses well in, sir; while I light it. Luckily my cigar is not out yet."

He crept boldly under the carriage, though the horses still champed at the bit; and, in an instant, a broad glare shot from under the carriage along the horses' feet, and for several yards in front. As the stranger rose to his full height, he perceived, for the first time, ladies in the carriage, and gallantly took off his hunting-cap. His countenance, thus fully revealed, was a remarkable one.

He was not, perhaps, handsome, certainly not so handsome as Thornton was generally considered; but then his face was peculiarly impressive. A broad, massive forehead; overhanging brows from which a dark eye gleamed like a coal of fire; a mass of thick, almost raven hair, and whiskers as heavy and even blacker, formed the most striking peculiarities of this countenance. The details of the face were, however, not less significant. The bold, finely cut nose, and the resolute-looking mouth, spoke of firmness and power in every curve and line.

"I beg pardon," he said, placing his hand on the dasher, and looking into the carriage, "but, as I am perfectly familiar with this road, may I offer my assistance as driver?"

He addressed Thornton, but his eyes wandered to myself, for though I sat on the back seat, I was in full view. I am sure I looked assent.

"I am much obliged to you," said Thornton, extending the reins, "you will confer a favor on us if you do."

The stranger made no answer, but flinging away his cigar, springing into the carriage, gathered the reins up firmly, and, giving a low whistle to the horses, we rattled forward immediately on a rapid trot. A sensation of relief was felt by both my aunt and myself, in spite of the accelerated pace at which we travelled. The stranger was

evidently at home with our steeds, and held the restive beasts in hand as firmly as if they had been playthings. Under his bold, but resolute and skilful driving, we soon passed the worst part of the road.

The storm was now passing away. The rain had ceased, and a few stars broke through the clouds. The white houses of the village of B— were visible just ahead.

"A strange scene is a camp-meeting," suddenly said the stranger, turning and addressing me. "May I be so bold as to ask if you ever saw one before?"

I replied that I had not. My aunt immediately added, that she "hoped her niece would never visit one again. For my part," she continued, "I was horrified and disgusted. It seemed almost impious, parts of it at least."

The stranger gazed at my aunt in silence, nodded, and then frankly turned to Thornton.

"And what is your opinion, sir?" he said, addressing my lover.

"Really, I can hardly say," replied Thornton, "I can't understand it. I'm too wet to think much about it, however, just now."

The stranger smiled, though almost imperceptibly.

"Well," he said, "I differ with you both. I confess I am half a convert to that preacher, though brought up, all my life, to despise Methodism. I have heard many orators, but never one like him."

My eyes met his as he thus spoke, and their glance must have assured him that one of his hearers, at least, agreed with him. My aunt now took up the conversation.

"I am sorry," she said, "to hear one, who seems so much of a gentleman, utter such opinions. Surely you cannot see religion in the mere physical excitement of a camp-meeting."

"I don't know about that," answered the stranger, bluntly. "I question whether these violent demonstrations are not absolutely necessary to a certain order of minds, when under the influence of religious feelings. Rude men, when excited by any joy or grief—around a dying bed, or at a successful election—find vent for their emotions in groans or shouts. Even the educated, if of a nervous, imaginative character, frequently do the same. I do not say that all religion exhibits excitement; but I certainly believe that, with many, the two go together. Heaven itself is described as a place where the redeemed cry hosanna forever."

These remarks, whether correct or not, were remarkable enough for a man picked up on the road, in a rough velveteen jacket. So my aunt seemed to think, at least; for she stared at the speaker without reply, evidently not capable of

it, but yet stubborn in her opinions. Thornton, however, took up the debate.

"For my part, sir," he said, eyeing the stranger. "I believe in no religion which is not one of conviction, and where it is one of conviction, it is calm and passionless."

"You mean that religion is, or ought to be entirely intellectual?"

"Certainly," replied Thornton.

"A religion of the intellect merely," said the stranger, "is a misnomer. Religion, like love, or hate, or friendship, is chiefly an affair of the feelings. The heart is concerned in it more than the head. I don't mean to say that the latter has nothing to do with religion; but, like this lamp beneath us, it can only point out the road: there must be something more powerful to carry us along, and that is the heart. A mere intellectual religion soon degenerates into cold formalism, or passes into absolute skepticism."

"You don't mean to say that nobody but shouting Methodists can be saved?" said Thornton.

"By no means. There are almost as many roads, I trust, to heaven, as there are Christian sects. I have charity for all. I strive not to judge my neighbor. But, if I must choose, I would rather be too enthusiastic than too cold—rather have too much heart in my religion than too little."

"Well, I can't say I like such ranting as we heard to-night," said Thornton, half pettishly, for he saw how intently I listened to the stranger.

"Parts of the sermon were rude, I own," said the stranger, "but so were the hearers. If oratory is great according to the success which attends it, surely Mr. N—— is a great, a transcendental orator; for I never beheld such an impression produced by mortal words before. I tell you, frankly, I envied that man, to-night! To believe, as he believes, that he is laboring, not for mere earthly aims, but for results that

shall endure through eternity, must be ennobling almost beyond conception. No wonder his tongue was clothed with thunder, or that his words were fire. Before such a vocation all worldly ambition becomes nothing, and, I can well imagine, that the highest results of rhetoric flow, like inspiration, from a speaker thus confident in a divine commission. But here we are at the village. I suppose you stop at the hotel."

He drew up as he spoke and tendered the reins to Thornton. The urbanity of the latter immediately triumphed over his sudden jealousy.

"Won't you go on with us?" he said.

"No, thank you," said the stranger, preparing to leap out. "I am living at a house close by, and as you can see the road now, I will go home at once. As I walked from the camp to where I met you, I am even more thoroughly soaked than yourself. But," he added, turning to me, "if the ladies will allow me, I will pay my respects to them in the morning."

I smiled an assent, and my aunt expressed, in words, the pleasure we should have on seeing one, who had been of such service to us. The next instant he had bowed, sprang from the carriage, vaulted over a fence, and was gone.

"An extraordinary man," said my aunt. "How very eloquently he talks!"

"A theological student, I suppose," said Thornton, drily.

I was the only silent one of the party. But, all that night, I dreamed of this stranger, with his impressive face, his bold and resolute bearing, his singularly attractive style of conversation, and, more than all, a something in his train of thought like what I had often indulged in myself, and which, therefore, exercised an irresistible fascination over me. I dreamed, a dozen times, that I was in peril of my life, and that he rescued me from death.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE VALLEY FARM; OR, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ORPHAN.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Charles J. Peterson, as the proprietor, in the Clerk's Office, of the District Court of the U. S., in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 97.

On the following morning, for the first time in my life, I awaited a visitor anxiously.

I felt nervous, I could not sit still; yet the hour of dinner approached without the appearance of the expected guest.

The conversation had turned on him at the breakfast-table, but had been confined of course to our own circle, in which there was no one who knew him. My uncle, grateful for the assistance rendered us, declared that he would have sought out the stranger, to thank him, if the latter had not expressed his determination to call.

We had abandoned the thought of seeing our new acquaintance, and were assembled in the public drawing-room waiting for the dinner gong, when his tall and striking figure suddenly presented itself at the door. A coat and pantaloons of black cloth, and a vest of white Marseilles, simply crossed by a black watch ribbon, made him scarcely recognizable for the same individual, who, in the dress of a workman, and on foot, had surprised us on the mountain road. Indeed I should not have known him but for his face; that countenance on which power was written in every line; and for the proud, yet graceful carriage which not even his coarse jacket the evening before had disguised.

He stood at the door, a moment, looking around the room, until his eye met mine, when, with a smile of recognition, he advanced hastily toward our group.

I felt my heart flutter and my color come and go. I knew that Thornton was watching me, but I could not help this agitation.

Our new acquaintance came up eagerly, and gave me his hand, after which he paid his respects to the other members of our party. His manner in fact was singularly free and manly, yet perfectly well-bred. One saw immediately that he was familiar with the etiquette of the best society, yet from a certain bold independence natural to him, and which sat gracefully upon him, not its slave.

"I forgot to ask your names, last night," he said, "or to tell my own, so I had to wait until I knew you would be assembled here for dinner,

before I could present myself. Besides, I had to be here, at this hour, as I dine with some friends at your hotel. And now, let me introduce myself—Mr. Walter Carrington."

My uncle rose, and announced his own name, tendering his hand again with scrupulous particularity to our guest, who rose and bowed. After this my uncle formally introduced him to the rest of us. The whole party then resumed their seats. My uncle again began to thank Mr. Carrington.

"Oh! I deserve no thanks, but rather censure," he said, "I believe it was my cigar that frightened the horses, sir. I heard the sound of approaching wheels, and as the road was narrow, stood close to the mountain-side in order to let the carriage pass. Naturally, in so doing, I turned around."

"That then was the light you thought an ignis fatuus," said Thornton, addressing me.

"I have been called many hard names in my life," said Carrington, good-humoredly, "but never an ignis-fatuus before. I hope, Miss Lennox, at least, will not find me one. However," he added, quickly, seeing perhaps that I colored, "I certainly came near leading you all to destruction, and deserve, therefore, blame, rather than praise."

My uncle immediately began to disabuse the idea that Carrington was in any way answerable for our peril; and Thornton magnanimously enlarged on the self-possession as well as strength which our guest had displayed.

"I did not believe," he remarked, "that any man could back the horses from that abyss."

"I cannot boast of any extraordinary self-possession, at least what I call such," replied Carrington. "But as for strength, I have, I believe, more than the common share. I ought to have been a waggoner, or miner, or something of that sort, instead of a professional man. I often console myself," he said, jestingly, "that if all other schemes should fail, I might earn a livelihood by feats of strength in the circus."

I have not yet described Carrington's smile. It was one of the most beautiful ever seen. His face was somewhat too stern in repose, something

too much like a majestic, but rugged mountain: it was the smile that made it winning. And this smile, now sportive, now inexpressibly sweet, lit up the countenance like sunlight, indeed it *was* the sunshine of the heart.

My aunt shook her head at this sally, which she took in a serious light, and remarked gravely—

“You spoke of a profession just now. From your conversation, last night, we supposed you were a student of divinity; but I presume now we were mistaken.”

Carrington looked serious in turn, as he replied, “I must plead guilty, madam, to a far less worthy profession. I am a lawyer, but lest that should prejudice you against me—for lawyers are considered sad scamps, I believe—let me urge in extenuation that I am but newly fledged.” He said this with returning gaiety: then added, seriously again, “I am not good enough, I fear, to be a minister. To enter that holy office, a consciousness of peculiar fitness for the task, is, or ought to be, requisite; and such a consciousness I have never felt. If I had, or if I ever do, I should at once abandon everything, and dedicate myself to the work.”

My aunt looked at him gratified, but still evidently not quite comprehending him. As for my uncle he stared in undisguised wonder; while on Thornton's lip there was the slightest perceptible curl of incredulity. Carrington turned to me instinctively as to the only one of the group who understood him. I felt strangely flattered.

The conversation went on. All present seemed to yield to the charm of Carrington's high spirits; of his remarkable individuality of character; and of the stores of knowledge which, without the slightest appearance of pedantry, he brought to bear on every subject that came up. He left on the mind the impression of one who had read much, but observed more; and who thoroughly digested all his stores of information, from whatever source derived: in a word, of a bold, and original, but just thinker. With my aunt he talked little: and with Thornton still less, for the latter wilfully withdrew into a gloomy silence. His principal conversation was directed to my uncle and myself. At last he informed us that he was going soon to the city, and expressed his intention, with our permission, to call on us there.

“What? Are you from ——?” said I and my uncle, in a breath.

“I was born there, but reared in these mountains,” he replied. “Now, however, that I have entered the law, and began in earnest the battle of life, my friends advise me to return thither. And as the gentlemen I am engaged to dine with,” he said, rising, “have come in, I must excuse myself for the present. I suppose I shall

not get a chance to eat much though,” he added, smiling, “for we will all be lawyers, and, just now, the profession here is divided about a knotty point, the sense of neither side of which could any reasonable man, not perverted by the quips and quirks of the science, see. If you hear us, Miss Lennox, wrangling like a den of angry bears, don't suppose there is danger of pistols, for lawyers, you know, have had, from time immemorial, more wit than courage, and not much, our enemies say, of either.”

He vanished with a bow as he spoke: and the next minute had joined his friends. They proved to be, as my uncle, with increased admiration of our new acquaintance informed me, the judges of the supreme court, who, in their circuit around the state, had stopped, for the day, at our hotel.

The group at the head of the table, where they sat, was striking. The Jupiter-like forehead and majestic presence of the chief-justice; the grey hairs of most of his associates, and the mature wisdom written on every face; and particularly the shrewd, wiry look of the youngest associate, famed, as I understood, for his acumen in the subtlest questions of the profession, speedily arrested and fixed the attention of the whole table, as far at least as was consistent with politeness.

Among these veterans, Carrington was received with cordiality. The chief-justice made room between himself and his youngest associate, for our new acquaintance, and, for some time, repartee and jest flew unintermittingly from one to the other. Carrington had a keen sense of the ridiculous, and his stories set the whole table in a roar.

When the dessert, however, came in, the long-delayed question was started: and instantly, like a ball thrown into the ring, all snatched at it.

The tumult, as Carrington had foretold, soon became excessive. But over all rose the giant tones of the chief-justice, who, after listening awhile in silence, had shook himself, like a lion rousing his strength, and plunged into the debate. During this tumult I once caught the eye of Carrington. He gave me a meaning smile, and then the burly form of the chief-justice, leaning forward in his eagerness, hid my new acquaintance from sight.

The question, as I afterward learned, was one to be decided, not so much by precedent, as by broad and comprehensive views. Hence learning was not so requisite in the debate as a bold range of thought. In the end, the controversy became confined to the chief-justice, his youngest associate, and Carrington; and when the ladies left the table, the storm of debate raged fiercer than ever.

I heard afterward that the discussion continued

over the wine, until the waiters came to set the tea-table. And my uncle, who had been introduced to the chief-justice by Carrington, said that the able and learned judge had highly complimented our new acquaintance for the ability he had displayed. "The youngster," he said, putting his arm within that of Carrington, so that the two stood, side by side, a head taller than any in the crowd, "will make a Samson yet; that is unless he marries too early—the usual Delilah of young lawyers."

What made me glad, yet melancholy at these words? What was Carrington to me, or I to him? Was I not *almost* engaged to Thornton?

Ah! with what a sensation of relief I repeated that word, "almost," to myself. I was still free: and, that night, I had delicious dreams.

The next day passed without my seeing Carrington. He called once, but we were out. I thought much, that day. I saw now, in seeing Carrington, why I had never been able to love Thornton. The latter wanted that high, resolute, self-dependant character which I had always unknowingly sought in my ideal, and never before found. Yet, in a few days more and I should have been committed forever to him! What a gulf I had escaped! Conscious now of the happiness that might be mine, if a man like Carrington should ever love me, I realized the misery that would attend a union with one similar to Thornton.

I saw Carrington but once more before we left the Springs. He was not in as high spirits as on his first visit; something seemed to be weighing on his mind. Occasionally, however, he would rally and be as brilliant as ever. He did not remain long. Once, during the interview, I noticed him watching Thornton, with a peculiar, scrutinizing look; and when he saw I had detected him, he colored. Could he have heard the common report that Thornton and I were engaged?

He seemed surprised to hear how soon we were going; was lost a moment in thought; and then renewed his request to have the honor of calling on us in the city. "I shall be there in about a month," he said.

We had parted at the door of the saloon. The others re-took their seats immediately, but I remained unconsciously gazing after him. When he had descended the slope on which the hotel stood, he turned, and, observing me, took off his hat and bowed. I colored with conscious guilt, and hastily re-entered the house. As I did so, I caught Thornton's eye: it had a half-jealous, half-inquiring look; but, covering my confusion by humming an opera-tune, I seated myself, taking no notice of his gaze.

Nearly two months had passed since our return to the city; and yet we had heard nothing

of Carrington. I frequently detected myself wondering whether he had come yet; but, ashamed of such interest in a mere passing acquaintance, I as often resolved to think no more of him. Did I succeed? Those who have been similarly situated can tell that I did not.

Thornton, who had adopted a silent, distant manner, during the few last days we were at the Springs, and who had maintained it for some weeks after our return, gradually melted into a more genial mood and became as entertaining as ever. He thought, perhaps, no one read his thoughts; but I am sure I did. With a lover's quick instinct he had seen, from the first, that Carrington was capable of becoming a formidable rival; and had been uneasy while there was any danger of his re-appearance. But this long delay had re-assured him. He believed that his rival was established somewhere else.

I began to think so too. My uncle had said, from the first, that it was almost insanity for a young man, without fortune or connections, and Carrington frankly acknowledged he had neither, to come to the city to practice law. "He will be lost in the vortex here," said my uncle, "whereas, in some country town, he may gain a foothold, and subsequently rise to eminence."

But, though I assured myself that I should never see him again, I did not renew, for one instant, the thought of marrying Thornton. From the hour I had discovered that the feeling I entertained for him was not love, I had adopted a different demeanor toward him, and studiously followed it out. I was not cold, for I esteemed him. I was not rude, for I respected myself. But he saw and felt the difference.

Yet, when he found the field left clear to him, he took courage. He remembered that his perseverance had once almost won me, and he flattered himself it would again. Ah! he little knew me.

I have been prolix, perhaps, in explaining these things; but I could not help it.

The reader will understand that I was not in love with Carrington. I only felt that I *could* love one like him. It is only in novels that people fall in love at first sight; and even then, I believe, nobody but school girls do it. Now I, at eighteen, was a woman, at least in heart; for the sufferings of my childhood had done for me what years do for others.

It was early in November when my uncle, coming in one day, said,

"Who do you think I have just seen?" And, without waiting for a reply, while I helped him off with his overcoat, he continued—"Mr. Carrington. He tells me he has been in town for a month."

The coat actually fell from my hands. "In

town for a month and never been here!" I mentally ejaculated. I felt myself first become pale, and then color to the temples.

"I asked him why he had not been to see us," continued my uncle, not observing my agitation, "and he blundered out something about business, time occupied with getting fixed, and other nonsense of that sort. Business!—I don't believe he has enough to pay his office rent, how could he? I had half a mind to ask him if you, or any of us had done anything to offend him at the Springs——"

"I offend him, uncle. Now you did not ask him that——"

"No, I did not; though I had a mind to. But, to cut the matter short, I insisted on his coming here to-night; and, at last, when I said how glad you would be to see him, he declared he would."

"Oh! uncle," I cried, blushing, "you did not say that—that I would be glad to see him?"

"Why, what's the matter?" he cried. "Don't you like him? I am sure he is a very agreeable young man."

Had my uncle looked at my face, obtuse as he was in matters of the heart, he must have guessed something of the truth; but I kept my countenance turned aside.

"Well, he is coming to-night. Be civil at any rate. You are not going out?"

"No," I answered, faintly; but I almost wished I was.

The evening came. I was dressed with more than usual care. Shall I confess it? I was piqued at Carrington's neglect, and resolved to look as beautiful as possible.

I was sitting at the centre-table, engaged on some light sewing, when he entered. I looked up. His eyes shone with sudden joy as his glance met mine. I was more successful in retaining my composure than he was, for I had been schooling myself all the evening. He looked, I thought, disappointed, at my merely polite reception of him; and, taking a seat by my uncle, began to talk about India.

Thornton was not there as yet. He had left town for a day or two, but expected to return this evening, though at a late hour, so that it was doubtful whether we should see him.

My aunt and I sewed quietly, at the table, having our conversation nearly entirely to ourselves, Carrington and my uncle only occasionally joining in for a moment.

Thus affairs continued for nearly half an hour.

Carrington's eyes, however, often wandered to where we sat; and, at last, after the conversation had languished, for some time, between him and my uncle, he rose and took a seat on the sofa, by me.

My aunt looked up, and smiled a welcome. She

thought, perhaps, he was diffident, and needed encouragement; she had no other way of accounting for his absence.

"How do you like a city life, Mr. Carrington?" she said, to open the conversation.

"Not as much as a rural one," he replied; and then stopped. He seemed under a restraint.

"Your profession is generally called dry and exacting. Do you like it?" she resumed, without lifting her eyes from her needle.

I looked up as he was about to answer. Our gaze met. I smiled. Immediately his countenance altered, and with some animation he replied,

"The law is fascinating enough to study, but the practice of it is far less pleasant. However," he added, with one of his old smiles, "of the last I know but little: we young lawyers are kept on probation, you know, for many a long year. Generally a man is thirty-five—and that I shall not be these seven years—before he has much to do in a large city."

"You need patience then," I said.

There was nothing in these words, but his whole countenance brightened up; and he answered, with a smile, addressing me,

"Lord Eldon used to say, that to succeed at the bar, a man must work like a dray-horse and live like a hermit."

"I wonder anybody is a lawyer, then," interposed my aunt, looking up from her work.

"Oh! I rather like it," replied Carrington, his fine eyes kindling. "Difficulties excite and stir one; the strife and the conquest for me; and, to do it justice, the law, from first to last, keeps a man on the strain. I think I should die if I had nothing to rouse me."

I looked at the speaker admiringly; I could not help it; these sentiments, so full of the power I revered in manhood, surprised me out of my self-possession. I blushed to find his eye fixed full on me. To cover my confusion I said,

"But, to be kept so long waiting for practice—does not this tire many out?"

"Yes! The laggards fall behind in the race and are never more heard of, but the glory of those who succeed is only increased by the difficulties conquered."

"I should think," drily interposed my uncle, who was without enthusiasm, "that a man of sense would become disgusted with a profession that was so long in making returns. Before thirty-five many a merchant has amassed a fortune."

"It is true," replied our guest, sadly, "that the law involves many a self-denial, at least to the student who aims high. He must, if poor, forbid himself some of the sweetest consolations of life—he has, perhaps, no near relatives, and,

therefore, no home, yet he cannot marry unless his wife is an heiress—he must be literally alone in the world—and this, while the hard, dry life of his profession makes him yearn for sympathy, as the parched earth, after a drought, longs for refreshing rain.”

He paused abruptly, sighed, and seemed embarrassed. I felt that he had spoken of himself. A light broke in upon me. He was in love, and his mistress was poor; this explained his neglect of us, as well as his melancholy words. And I sighed also.

Conscious that he had nearly betrayed himself, he immediately changed the conversation to a gayer strain. He and I were soon engaged in an exchange of repartee, which infinitely amused my uncle and aunt.

Suddenly Thornton came in. We had all been so occupied that we had not heard the door-bell, and, therefore, his entrance was the first intimation of his approach. When he saw Carrington he turned as white as ashes. But immediately controlling himself he shook hands with all, our guest among the rest. Then he took the seat by my uncle which Carrington had vacated half an hour before.

The rest of the evening dragged on rather heavily. Carrington endeavored to rally the conversation, and I assisted him, but the sudden appearance of Thornton had cast a chill over everything. It was yet early when our guest left. Thornton remained longer. He tried to talk, after Carrington had gone; but I answered only in monosyllables, and scarcely raised my eyes from the work. At last he took his leave.

From that time Carrington became a constant visitor at my uncle's. At first indeed he came only at comparatively long intervals, but afterward his calls were more frequent, until at last he made his appearance at least every week.

Thornton grew visibly jealous. Not an evening passed that he did not visit us; but his behavior was variable. Sometimes he would exert himself to be agreeable; at other times, he would sit silent and moody. When Carrington was present, the behavior of Thornton became even more strange. He would often remain during the entire evening, watching anxiously the countenances of both my visitor and myself; but as frequently he would start hurriedly up, mutter something of an engagement he had forgotten, and disappear.

Carrington grew more and more a favorite with my uncle. But it was not so with my aunt. She soon began to suspect that Carrington visited us, in consequence of an interest in me; and her manner toward him changed from comparative cordiality to chilling reserve.

To me also she became occasionally ungracious,

so that I began to recognize again the persecutor of my youth. By numerous innuendoes she strove at once to disparage Carrington, and force me into a confession of my interest in him, if indeed I possessed any.

But on this subject I dared not examine my own heart. The conduct of Carrington left me still in the dark as to his real sentiments toward me. A struggle seemed to be going on in his bosom. At times I fancied he loved me, but then again I was persuaded that he did not. But I ceased to think that he loved another, perhaps because the idea pained me too much.

In consequence of this uncertainty, of my aunt's growing harshness, and of the unpleasant character of my relations with Thornton, my health began to give way.

Oh! how I wished that Thornton would speak, in order that I might cut a part of the mesh that enveloped me. I strove to let my actions be as decisive as possible; but I saw, notwithstanding, that he occasionally yielded to hope. At last my behavior toward him became positively rude.

Often I caught the stern eye of my aunt fixed upon me, often her hard brow became even harder with a frown, as she heard me decline Thornton's repeated invitations, or witnessed my chilling manner toward him. Frequently also I noticed a look of surprise and inquiry on my uncle's face, as if he, blind as he was in such matters, began to suspect.

At last Thornton, maddened by my icy demeanor, resolved to terminate his suspense by making me a formal tender of his hand. Heretofore he had put off this crisis, hoping to be sure before he spoke; but now doubts tortured him into speaking. Yet he foresaw the rejection that he received.

I softened my refusal as much as possible; for I pitied him from my soul. Besides, he never appeared to better advantage than on this occasion. The momentous interest at stake gave him, for the moment, that manliness and elevation of character, whose absence had lost him my love. Nor was I without some compunctions of conscience as to my former treatment of him. Though I had never really favored his suit, I had unquestionably, at one time, not frowned on it. True, I had done this more through the fault of my friends than of myself, and had altered my demeanor the instant I saw that I never could love him as a wife should love her husband; but this did not entirely free me, in my own opinion.

Never shall I forget the look of despair on Thornton's countenance when he heard the decisive negative.

“It is as I feared, Miss Lennox,” he said. “The plans of my life are shipwrecked. God help me!”



He sat for some minutes in silence, his head bowed gloomily on his breast.

I did not attempt to soothe him, by hoping he would be my friend. How could I? I knew such pretended consolation would be gall and wormwood to him.

At last he spoke.

"I am about to take an unpardonable liberty," he said, hesitatingly. "But I beg you to answer me!" And now he spoke rapidly and hoarsely. "Do you love Mr. Carrington?"

I felt that my cheeks, neck and brow were dyed in crimson. I could have wished the floor to open. I thought I would sink for shame.

"I am answered," he cried, springing up; and he muttered between his teeth, "fool that I was not to know it from the first!"

I too rose, laying my hand upon his arm.

"You misunderstand me," I said. "There is nothing—between—Mr. Carrington—and myself."

The words were spoken with difficulty; for I seemed to be choking.

His eyes gleamed with sudden joy. He seized my hand between both of his, pressing it convulsively.

"Then he does not love you, nor you him. Oh! Mary, say this again; and I will bless you; it will sweeten, a thousand times, my own rejection."

He was terribly agitated, so that, as he spoke, he trembled like one in a fit.

What could I say? I did not know that Carrington loved me, but I hoped, nay! almost believed that he did. As for my own heart, I shrank from examining it. I looked at Thornton pleadingly; but I could not speak.

He gazed wildly, passionately into my face, despair darkening in his eyes as he met no answering look of confidence.

Suddenly he flung my hand away, and with a look of mingled agony, jealousy, and attempted calmness rushed from the room. The next instant the hall-door shut with a violence that jarred the whole house.

I had struggled to keep composed, and had succeeded until this moment. But now I flung myself on the sofa and burst into a passion of hysteric tears. Oh! how miserable I felt.

Half that night was spent in weeping. I know not how it may affect others, but, to me, to refuse an estimable man, whom you cannot love, has always given inexpressible pain.

Before I descended to breakfast, on the ensuing day, a letter was brought to me in Thornton's handwriting. The missive had few words, but they were full of misery. He had left, he said, for New Orleans, where he had some business; and he would not return until he had cured

himself of his unfortunate passion. "If I never succeed in this," were his concluding words, "we shall not again meet in this world. Keep my secret. God bless you, whatever be my fate."

I found, on taking my seat at the table, that my uncle had also received a letter from Thornton, announcing his departure.

"Strange," said my uncle, "that he should have business so imperative. He will be gone three months at least, perhaps more. What shall we do to console you for the absence of your lover, Mary?" And he turned suddenly to me.

The action, not less than the words brought the color to my face. But, after rallying my thoughts, I said—

"Not my lover, uncle!"

My heart beat so fast as I spoke, and my agitation was so great that I could hardly articulate; for I did not know but that my words would bring on an explanation, from which I shrank instinctively. But my uncle's answer re-assured me.

"Pooh! Pooh!" he said. "Like all the women, I see—innocent, very innocent. Pray give me some sugar: you've forgot to put it into in my cup. I've no notion to drink bitter coffee, even if your lover does run away."

My aunt said nothing, but looked at me gravely. I felt, with many misgivings, that she suspected the truth.

All that day I feared that she would ask me if I knew why Thornton had left us so suddenly; and I could not determine what to reply; for I was resolved against telling a falsehood, and yet I saw no other way to keep Thornton's secret. But fortunately my aunt did not allude to the subject.

The winter had now past, and spring, in all its beauty and perfume, was coming in. Carrington became a more frequent visitor at the house. I saw him three or four times a week, and some weeks even oftener.

In these visits, Carrington often found himself at variance with my aunt on speculative points. He never sought discussion, but he was too honest, when asked his opinion, to deny it; and, though my aunt invariably tried to make a convert of him, she was always worsted in the argument.

I remember one evening in particular, when a controversy arose between them.

"Have you heard, Mr. Carrington," she began, "of that disgraceful affair, the elopement of Miss Sewell? What do you think of it?"

"I heard of it to-day," he replied. "And her conduct seems to me equally foolish and wrong."

"Foolish? Wrong?" ejaculated my aunt, warmly. "It was positively wicked. I know no words of condemnation sufficiently strong to

characterize it. And her only excuse is that her parents wished her to marry Mr. Benson."

"But, aunt," I interposed, "Mr. Benson was twice her age, and had, it was said, broken the hearts of two wives."

My aunt stole a look at me, from her keen grey eyes, that would have crushed one not accustomed to it. Carrington saw it and came to my aid.

"I don't defend Miss Sewell's elopement," he said, "but I think she did right in refusing to marry Mr. Benson, whom I know to be habitually intemperate, as well as guilty of other vices, which, in a poorer man, would exclude him from decent society. It would have been a moral murder to have married that poor girl to such an old rascal."

My aunt looked at him severely.

"You and I differ widely as to what is the duty of children, Mr. Carrington," she said. "My Bible teaches me that they are to obey their parents."

"What if the act commended is a wrong one?" he asked.

She looked puzzled for an instant, and then said—"then the parents, and not the children are accountable for it."

"I can't think that is so," replied Carrington.

"The question, however, is an extremely nice one for casuists, and not to be decided as a cold abstraction; but, on the contrary, every particular case should be judged on its own merits. From what I know of the instance before us, I should unhesitatingly say that Miss Sewell was justified in refusing to marry Mr. Benson. But she ought to have contented herself with a mere negative, and not have united herself with one whom her father had forbidden her to marry: there is no excuse in short for her having disobeyed her parents more than necessary."

My aunt shook her head. Carrington continued—

"Suppose her father had told her to commit a deadly sin, would she have been justified in obedience? Of course not. Yet to marry such a man as Benson is surely a sin, is moral death to the immortal part of her nature. The truth is, marriages have come to be, of late years, too conventional; parents ask only whether the bridegroom has money or position, not whether he is a proper person to whom to commit a daughter's temporal and eternal welfare: and hence the increasing unhappiness in the married state, the scandal of fashionable life especially, and the growing frequency of applications for divorce."

My aunt was silenced; but the rapidity with which she went on with her work, showed that she was little pleased; and from that evening she liked Carrington, I thought, less than ever.

At the back of my uncle's house was a garden in which I cultivated my favorite flowers; and here a summer-house had been erected on an artificial mound. This little retreat was covered all over with the Chinese honeysuckle, whose fragrance, for it was now in blossom, made the arbor my constant resort. Frequently Carrington would find me here. The hours never flew faster than on such occasions. In our being thus alone together there seemed a sacredness which soon made him inexpressibly dear to me. Yes! at last I owned to myself that I loved.

Maidenly pride no longer struggled against my yielding to this conviction. Why should it? Could I doubt the sincerity of Carrington, and did he not, by every look, gesture and tone, betray his affection?

He was no longer, as of old, subject to moody fits; he no more appeared under an unaccountable restraint: but his eyes, beaming on me with unspeakable tenderness, and the low, heart-felt eloquence of his words, assured me of his priceless love.

Oh! what delicious hours were those. How my heart would beat when I heard his step coming up the walk! How I would hang upon the tones of his voice, as, with the ambition of a high and soaring nature, he talked of his future career, and opened to me his most secret hopes!

After evenings thus spent I would sleep the sweetest of slumbers, because full of delicious, happy dreams. In the world of the imagination then thrown open, what visions would rise before me. I saw Carrington, covered with honors, the centre of applauding thousands, taking his seat in the councils of the nation; and always, in such dear dreams, I recognized myself as his wife. Blessed, blessed visions—too soon destroyed.

Why should I thus record my weakness? And yet was it weakness? Let the reader, when all is told, decide.

One evening, Carrington came to announce that he would be absent for a few days. "I am about," he said, "to attend the wedding of an old classmate at B—. He has lived, for some years in the west, and only comes east to claim his bride, for the engagement has been of some standing."

"And he carries his young wife, delicately nurtured, out into a wild, half-settled country, away from all her family and friends?" I said.

"Of course," replied he, laughing. "He would scarcely leave her behind."

"She must love him dearly."

I was thinking only of the privations of her future lot, when I said this. The reply of Carrington was earnest.

"And would not any woman—any *true* woman,"

he said, "who was willing to give herself to her husband, be willing also to follow him to the ends of the earth?"

I coincided at heart in all he said, but I was a little annoyed that he had misunderstood me, the more, perhaps, because it was partially my own fault. Hence a spirit of gay perversity, such as I have often had to lament in my life, seized me. I replied,

"Oh! that is very pretty and sentimental. But do you think, sir," I said, looking saucily up at him, "that the comforts of life are nothing to our sex? That old social ties can be broken as easily as one snaps pack-thread? Is it a trifle to leave acquaintances, friends, the refinements of cities, brothers, sisters, parents, home itself, to follow a husband wherever he may choose to go? Your sex have a way of fancying," I continued, with a slight tone of sarcasm, "that we women are so honored by your love, that a condescending word from you is enough to repay us for any sacrifice. But we are not *all* of us ready to submit, I can assure you, to this grand style."

I stopped, for I feared I had gone too far. The face of Carrington had assumed an air of seriousness, and he regarded me with a fixed, earnest look, in which there were traces of some painful emotion resolutely kept down. Did he take my remarks as having a personal application? What mischievous spirit induced me to proceed, knowing, as I did, that I should still further wound his sensitiveness? Pique, I am sure: pique at myself for having done wrong; mingled with pride that urged me to a still greater error, rather than admit the offence.

"Indeed," I resumed, after a pause, the color mounting to my cheeks, "I don't know whether a man is justifiable in asking such sacrifices: too often selfishness is thus made to wear the aspect of affection."

There was a painful silence. I already repented of what I had said. I picked a flower, and pulled the leaves rapidly off, looking down on the ground.

At last Carrington gravely spoke.

"You say right," he said. "Beyond a certain point it is selfishness for a man to ask a woman to share his lot and love. In the case of my friend it is, perhaps, so; but there are other instances where it would be still more apparent. It would be selfishness for one poor and unknown, to whom a long life of struggle presented itself, to induce, by any representations, one born to a better and happier lot, to share his fate. Why should he deceive himself and her with the idea that his affection is disinterested, when only the selfish desire to lighten his own load by inducing her to bear it with him, actuates him? But we hug phantoms like these all our life, and

pride ourselves on the nobleness of our motives when often they are meanest!"

He spoke, at the last, with impassioned earnestness, though I thought there was a slight shade of bitterness in his tone.

Oh! how easily I could have answered these fallacious arguments. With a few words I could, at least, have assured him that I did not think such a suitor would be merely a selfish one. I could have told him, as I had often told my own heart, that God had wisely and beneficently bestowed human affection, in order that it might sweeten the cares and griefs of life; and that marriage for any other reasons than a mutual love and esteem was sacrilege to our natures. But I did not. Had I not just expressed different sentiments? It is true these opinions were uttered in jest, but it was true also that he ought to have known this, and in consequence not have answered me so seriously. My pride was thus still further engaged against a recantation.

There was a long and painful silence. I asked myself why he did not speak out the feelings which, I believed, then moved his heart? If he loved me, why did he not dare all? I would then have had an excuse for telling him that I thought no sacrifice too great for a wife to make in behalf of a husband. I would have assured him that sacrifices were, in such cases, almost pleasures to a true, a loving woman. But he did not speak, and I could not.

At last he broached another subject; but there was a constraint in conversation for the remainder of the evening. We talked on many themes; but the old feeling of confidence was gone. He lingered later than usual nevertheless, as if loath to leave. Eleven o'clock had struck before he departed.

"Farewell," he said, as he held my hand at parting; and then added hesitatingly—"if I do not get off to-morrow, I may call again to-morrow evening."

My heart leaped with joy at these words, for they implied a hint that he would defer his journey for a day; and, when we next met, our slight misunderstanding might be explained away. I regarded them as an advance for a reconciliation, and met them accordingly.

"Come—*do* come," I said, and my eyes, in spite of all that had passed, assured him that my former idle words had no meaning.

He pressed my hand, half raised it to his lips, seemed to hesitate, then let it fall, and was gone.

The next evening came and went, yet he did not make his appearance. I confess I was disappointed. I supposed, however, that he had left town in the morning, until my uncle, on coming in, said,

"I have just met Carrington in the street.

He is off for B—— to-morrow; and told me to give his compliments to the ladies."

And was this all? No message to explain his absence. I felt heart-sick. Then pride came to my aid; for surely I had not deserved this!

After what had passed the evening before, after my manner at parting, he owed it to me to call, or, if prevented, to explain. He had done neither. Yet, after a moment, I reflected that business might have kept him away.

"I presume he was much occupied, this evening, it being his last," I said, carelessly, in order to see if my uncle would confirm this hope.

"No, I found him in a *cafe*, where he was taking his coffee with two other young lawyers; they had been together the whole evening, laughing, and jesting, 'killing time,' Carrington said."

Then, for the first time, there flashed across me the terrible, the humiliating suspicion that this man had only been playing with my affections. What else could explain his "killing time" with two young associates, when I was counting the hours for his arrival?

With what anxiety I had listened to every step

that approached the house, and how my heart had sunk as I heard one after another pass by! At every ring at the bell I started, but only to find it was not he. Thus, devoured by eagerness and anguish, I had seen the evening glide by, hope gradually darkening into despair, until the last fond expectation had been so cruelly destroyed by my uncle's words.

While I had been watching for the coming of Carrington; while I had been suffering every fluctuation of hope and misery; while my heart had been yearning toward him with unutterable love, he had been idly jesting with his gay companions, utterly forgetful of his promise, or only remembering me to turn my love into ridicule. Was I not humbled?

Yes! my parting words, at our last interview, had revealed my secret: and now he was triumphing in his conquest, and perhaps making sport of it.

Oh! bitter, degrading thought. What pen shall record the agonies of that self-accusing night, or tell of the tears that through long hours wet my pillow.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE VALLEY FARM; OR, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ORPHAN.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Charles J. Peterson, as the proprietor, in the Clerk's Office, of the District Court of the U. S., in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 131.

My suspicions that Carrington had been trifling with me, received additional confirmation when weeks passed without his again making his appearance.

I knew that the period for his return to the city had long departed, and I saw, in this neglect, a proof of his unworthiness.

But, nevertheless, I could not, at all times, be satisfied that he had deceived me. I asked myself if I had not attached more meaning to his conduct than he had expected, or desired? And then I reflected that he had never spoken of love.

Yet, notwithstanding these reasonings, I *felt* that he had sought my affections, and afterward rejected them without cause. Yes! without cause; for I vainly searched my memory to find some excuse for his conduct. Had we not parted kindly after our little misunderstanding? Surely he could not have mistook my last look.

My pride revolted at being deserted. With youth, beauty, accomplishments, and flatterers said talents, I had yet been left without apology. If I had sought the too common revenge of my sex under similar circumstances, I should have given my hand to some one of my remaining suitors, but I could not thus violate the holiness of the matrimonial tie. I might be unhappy, but I would not, by an unworthy union, make myself more miserable still.

I do not know that all my readers can understand this feeling. I have conversed with many, even of my own sex, who could not.

One day, my uncle came in late to dinner, with every mark of excitement. "I have just heard a speech," he said, by way of apology, "that made me forget the time: it was delivered by that Carrington, who used to visit here so much; why the deuce, Mary, don't he come now: too much occupied with business, hey?—or have you offended him? However, that's nothing to the point. It was a great murder case, in which, against the opinion of the entire bar, he has succeeded in proving the prisoner innocent, and has got an acquittal."

How my heart throbbed at these words! And yet I felt angry at myself, the next instant, for my momentary exultation in Carrington's success.

"I never heard such a speech," continued my uncle. "Tears were in every eye. Even the judge was affected. That youngster will be in Congress some of these days."

We sat down to dinner. My uncle's mind was still on Carrington. After having discussed his soup awhile, he looked up and said,

"What *is* the reason, Mary, that Carrington never comes here now? Do you know? It never struck me much before, but now that I think of it, his absence seems strange. He used to be here two or three times a week."

I colored and was embarrassed. My aunt said drily, "perhaps, Mary has refused him."

"No," I replied, and there I stopped: I could say no more.

"Then, what, in heaven's name, was it?" cried my uncle, dropping his bread, his spoon almost following.

"Oh! brother, how can you use such expressions?" cried my aunt. "And a man of your age too?"

Pshaw! None of your nonsense, Sarah," he said, pettishly, "or I'll treat you to half a dozen good, round seamen's oaths. No: I won't either: that would be ungentlemanly. But now, niece, do you know why Carrington don't visit here?"

"No, my dear uncle," I replied, for I had regained composure. "He left me, as I thought, in the most kindly manner last summer, and I have never seen him since."

"Odd, very odd," said my uncle, returning to his soup. "It's almost as strange as Thornton's abrupt departure. By the bye, he was only to stay three months, and he has been gone six: and the yellow fever, too, playing the deuce in New Orleans. Don't you know anything about Thornton's queer behavior either, Mary?"

He fixed his keen, gray eye suddenly upon me: and I blushed guiltily.

"Perhpas Mary refused him," said my aunt, giving me a searching look.

This time my uncle's spoon followed the bread. He sat back in his chair, his hands fallen down by his side, and ejaculated,

"I hope not. For heaven's sake, Mary, what did you mean? But no, it cannot be; I have always found you a dutiful child; and you are to marry Thornton of course, you know."

I looked down, trembling violently, and believe I gave a frightened "yes," in reply. I did not know, at the time, what I said. I saw that, when the truth came to be known, there would be a terrible scene. My uncle, kind and gentle as he was generally, brooked no opposition when his heart was set on an object: and believed, moreover, that it made little difference to a woman whether she married for love or not.

"Well, well, don't be so flustered, niece! Your aunt is always guessing wrongly. Let us eat our dinners in peace: and, after that, wheel out the chess-board, for I expect an old friend."

The winter came, and proved unusually gay. The opera, after a long series of years, was again thrown open, and everybody pretending to taste or *ton* flocked to it. I went frequently, sometimes attended by my uncle, sometimes by one of my acquaintances. My uncle invariably fell asleep during the acts, and only woke up at the ballet. My aunt shook her head at the opera and ball-room, but my regularity at church partially atoned, in her eye, for what she called my dissipation.

Soon after the new year had set in, what was my surprise to see Thornton enter the house, at dinner-time, one day, with my uncle!

What could have brought him, I said? Was he cured of his attachment to me? His embarrassed manner and deprecating look assured me that this was not so; and I puzzled myself during the whole meal to account for his return.

I was not long in doubt. My aunt and I left the gentlemen over their wine and retired to the parlor. Very shortly she rose and went out of the room. I felt no suspicion, however, of her intentions, until the door opened and Thornton entered. Then the truth flashed upon me. She had penetrated the purpose of our visitor, and intentionally left me alone.

Thornton at once took his seat by my side. He flushed, then grew pale, and fidgetted continually. I made a common-place remark; but he answered only by a monosyllable. His mind was evidently pre-occupied. At last, he said nervously—

"I am come to trouble you, Miss Lennox, on a subject which I had thought never to mention again: and, as a preliminary, I must entreat your forgiveness for recurring to it."

I bowed. He proceeded.

"I heard in New Orleans that Mr. Carrington

visited you no longer: in a word, that you had refused him."

"Mr. Thornton," said I, interrupting him, "before you go further—indeed, to spare you the trouble of going further—let me assure you, that you have been misinformed. I have *not* refused Mr. Carrington."

"And does he then still visit you?" he said, his countenance falling.

"No," I replied. "On that point, you have been rightly informed."

"And may I inquire, then?" he began respectfully.

I drew myself laughingly up. My eyes, I am sure, flashed.

"Pardon me," he said. "I know it was an unwarrantable impertinence. And yet," he cried, rising suddenly, and putting his hand to his brow, "it is useless for me to disguise the truth from myself—you love Carrington—I feel that you do—he is the real bar to my happiness."

I rose too, and moved to the door. He saw my object, and seized me by the arm, though his manner otherwise was respectful, even supplicatory.

"Forgive me," he cried, "for what I have said. Indeed, I am almost beside myself. But I have tried: oh! how I have tried, Miss Lennox, to conquer this passion for you, but I cannot—I cannot," he added, despairingly; and relinquishing my arm, he let his hands drop beside him, and stood in an attitude of mournful dejection. I pitied him from my heart. I could, indeed, feel for him even more acutely than at our last interview. But what could I say? I was silent.

"Oh! Miss Lennox," he said, closing his hands, "you do not know what I have suffered—what I suffer even now! I have hurried here from the other end of the Union, full of hope; for I thought that, if you love no one else, you might marry me. I would have you even if you hated me—indeed I would. But now to see this cruel end to all my bright dreams," and he covered his face with his hands, and sobbed aloud.

There was a weakness in this man that made me despise, while I pitied, him. Did I not love, and as hopelessly? Yet, like the Spartan boy, I determined that my secret should devour my heart, before I would betray it. I turned involuntarily from him.

"Is there no hope?" said Thornton, catching my hand. "Will not years of waiting—a servitude as long as Jacob's—any species of probation whatever win you?"

"Not centuries," I answered, almost sternly, thinking of the difference between the manliness of Carrington and the pitiful weakness of my present suitor. Then I added more kindly, "between you and I, Mr. Thornton, there lies, in

sympathies, in feelings, in the whole character, a vast and impassable gulf."

"But they say," he pleaded, "that where there is the greatest difference in these respects there is the best chance for happiness."

I shook my head.

"That is not my way of thinking," I said. "It only answers where the wife is the slave or puppet of the husband. I could never be either. Indeed, Mr. Thornton," said I, smiling, and giving him my hand, to make amends for my late harshness, "if we were to marry, I am sure I should be so self-willed that you would hate me before the honeymoon was over. And now let this subject be forever dropped. I do not think I shall marry—certainly I shall not for years."

He pleaded much longer; but this is enough. At last he retired, utterly heart-broken, he said; and indeed he looked so.

I did not shed tears this time, but I sat on the sofa, with my face buried in my hands, full of melancholy thoughts. Why should I thus, I asked myself, be the cause of such pain to others? I had been sometimes accused of coquetry. Was my grief at having inspired this unfortunate passion—was my own unrequited, but, as I thought, unsuspected love, the punishment for such trifling?

I was still plunged in this reverie, and oh! how unhappy, when the door opened and my aunt entered the room. I looked up at her step. Her face wore a peculiar expression that startled me: it was that of intense, but half suppressed rage. She walked to the window, affected to arrange the blinds, sat down, got up, and finally approached me threateningly. I half rose in surprise.

"Oh! sit still, sit still," she cried. "I am not going to strike you. You are too old to be whipped, I suppose, though you deserve it soundly; but I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself, you forward creature. Did you learn such unmaidenly behavior from me? You needn't stare. You know well enough what I mean—refusing a man you gave every sort of encouragement to for years, because you hope to get another, who, on account of your forwardness, has ceased visiting the house!"

At this insult, I became dizzy with indignation and shame. How had my aunt learned my secrets? Had she been listening to my refusal of Thornton? Did she overhear the parting words of my last interview with Carrington? But the outrage she had done my modesty soon overcame every other consideration, and the fire of an honest indignation mantled high on my cheek.

"How dare you?" I began, drawing myself up. "How dare you utter such untruths?"

"What! You have not refused Thornton, then?" interrupting me.

She said this with a sneer, which too plainly implied that she knew better.

"You have been listening," I said, contemptuously. "Honorable conduct!"

I was stung to madness by her insinuation, or I never would have thus spoken.

She became apparently beside herself with passion.

"I tell you what, Miss Mary," she said, her face perfectly livid, and she advanced close to me, and shook her finger fiercely in my face, "if you were my child I would turn you out of doors this minute, you ungrateful jade! Have I not fed and clothed you from a baby; yet this is the language you use toward me. Vanity, pride, insolence, ingratitude, brazen coquetry, shameless immodesty, every wicked thing that an unregenerate heart can breed, runs riot in you. I wash my hands of you. Go your way." And she turned her back on me, walking toward the door.

I half repented of what I had said. But her injustice—her mean espionage recurred to my memory and prevented my making any apology.

When she reached the door, she appeared to change her mind, for she retraced her steps and again addressed me.

"I forgive you," she began, with an air of superiority which irritated me more than her anger, "for all your unprovoked insolence to me. But have you no feeling, Mary Lennox, for your kind, good, old uncle? He has set his wishes upon this match."

I own that, at these words, my heart smote me. If my aunt had not been present, I should have burst into tears. But I bit my lip to conceal my feelings, and was silent.

She was exasperated that I made no reply, and again lost her temper.

"What are you? What have you?" she said, still tauntingly, "that you should be so nice about your lovers? Every stitch you wear, every morsel you eat, you owe to your uncle; and yet, on the very first occasion that offers to please him, you obstinately outrage his wishes. He shall know all to-day. It seems you have refused Thornton once before, and that you add deception to ingratitude."

I scorned to correct her, by explaining that I had acted as Thornton requested; but I resolved she should not accuse me to my uncle.

"You need not trouble yourself," I said, coldly and haughtily. "I shall acquaint my uncle myself with Mr. Thornton's proposal."

She grew paler then ever with rage, more at my tone than at my words, I suppose.

"And will you tell him too," she said, sneeringly, "that you are in love with Carrington—that your unmaidenly pursuit of him drove him away?"

"This to me, and for the second time," I said, white with emotion. "You know it is false. How dare you insult a woman, like yourself?"

My eyes flashed fire: I felt my form dilate. She drew back as from a fury.

"Mary Lennox," she said, at last, lifting up her hands before her, "that awful temper, which you had from a child, will prove your eternal ruin! You will think of this behavior on your dying bed. I see you are resolved on your own destruction, and I discharge my conscience of all care over you. Go, seek your lover. Go, be his wife, or what you will."

Breathless with passion at this new insult, I would have spoken, but she continued violently, as she retreated backward to the door, "if your uncle is of my mind, you leave this house to-night, unless you choose to obey."

The door closed after her. Overcome by the scene, I burst into tears, and sank on the sofa. Suddenly, I started up, crying, "I *will* leave the house to-night, unless she retracts her words. I will go to my uncle. She shall not prejudice him against me. He shall know the truth."

My hand was reaching forth toward the lock, when, recollecting my uncle's wishes with respect to Thornton, and remembering also his stubborn inflexibility, I paused. Something whispered me that the approaching interview was to be a great crisis in my life; and I already foreboded a fatal result. My knees sank under me, and trembling in every limb, I leaned against the wall for support. What if I should lose the friendship of my uncle? What if I should be thrust from the house?

For an instant, I turned faint from the spectacle. "Remain," whispered the tempter, "remain and marry Thornton, for Carrington can never be yours."

But another voice seemed to whisper, "rather submit to anything than consent to a marriage which would be in violation of the law of God, and would render your whole life a mistake." And this voice appeared to come in the remembered tones of my dying mother. It softened me at once.

I lifted my eyes above, and they were now streaming with tears.

"Oh! my mother," I cried, "watch thy erring child! May I do nothing in pride; but may my way be made clear!"

Suddenly strength came to my limbs, and comparative repose to my mind. The storm of passion had passed away. I felt sustained by an unseen hand. With somewhat of serenity, I sought the smoking-room, where I knew I should find my uncle at this hour.

My aunt, true to her threat, had already preceded me. She had found time too, short as had

been the interval, to inform my uncle of Thornton's rejection. She was still talking violently when I entered, and my uncle was listening with a stern countenance; but at sight of me she ceased.

My uncle turned toward me, sorrow and anger written on his brow.

"Mary," he said, "what is this I hear? Have you really refused Thornton?"

The tone in which he spoke showed that his anger was fast surpassing his grief.

"I have, my dear uncle," I said, sitting down by him, and laying my hand on his knee, "and I am sure, when you have heard my reasons, you will not censure me."

He had frowned at first, and attempted to withdraw from me, but I clung to him, and he relinquished the effort.

My aunt curled her thin lip, as she watched me; but she said nothing, quietly proceeding with her knitting, which usually employed her at this hour.

"I cannot marry Thornton," I said, speaking calmly, but with a beating heart, "because I do not love him; and marriage, without love, would make me miserable."

"The devil —"

"Nay, uncle," I said, "listen. I am, I trust, not foolish in believing that marriage is a tie that nothing but death can break—that it is to endure amid sorrow as well as joy, in age as well as youth, in privation, in sickness, when one has lost every personal charm as well as when one is in the flush of beauty. It has trials, and severe ones; cares, many and exacting. It makes us either better or worse, and so affects our eternal destiny. It is a condition where, unless mutual affection smoothes the path, a thousand events, and of almost daily occurrence, will prove a stumbling block to husband, or wife, or both. Even toward relatives, affection is required to overlook faults that otherwise would irritate us: then how necessary is love to influence us in the closer relation of matrimony. While I esteem Thornton, I do not love him. There are points in his character, which you may think immaterial, that would fret and annoy me constantly as his wife. If I was to marry him, I am sure I could not be happy, and I fear I should make him miserable also."

I had endeavored to speak as if I had no personal interest in the subject. My uncle was obviously staggered. He had not expected an appeal to his reason, but a petition for clemency. He looked at my aunt in surprise and perplexity.

She came to his rescue, by saying drily,

"I had not time to tell you, brother, that the true reason why Mary has refused Thornton, is because she has fallen in love with that man Carrington."



When she had spoken these words, she stooped over her work, methodically resumed counting stitches, and went on knitting.

My uncle started half up, threw my hand from him, and fixing his gaze upon me, sternly regarded me. He seemed to find in my looks a confirmation of the charge.

"What," he said, at last, "marry a beggar! Reject a man of Thornton's unexceptionable character and large fortune, for—a paltry adventurer——"

"I am not going to marry Carrington," I cried, seizing my uncle's arm, and interrupting him, "indeed, indeed, I am not. I will swear solemnly not to do it without your consent, uncle; only don't ask me to marry a man whom I do not love."

"Then you love Carrington!"

"I did not say so," I replied. "He has never spoken to me of love—we have not met for months—I never expect to see him again."

My uncle scrutinized me with a perplexed, and angry brow. My aunt once more ceased the play of her knitting-kneedles to interpose a word.

"How can you say that, Mary Lennox?—and you ready to throw yourself into his arms? The best thing I know of Carrington," and she took up another stitch, "is that your forward conduct disgusted him, and caused him to cease visiting at this house. But you still cherish the hope, as you know, of getting him, infatuated girl that you are! Do you think, brother, it is possible, for one entirely dependant like her, to refuse a wealthy and irreproachable alliance, unless she had wilfully set her heart on somebody else?"

Oh! what hate I felt toward this woman, as she sat there, composed and rigid, hardening my uncle's heart against me.

"Do not believe her, uncle," I cried, in agony; for I saw that, as she spoke, his frown darkened.

"Mary Lennox!" shrieked my aunt, dropping her knitting, and lifting up both hands.

"Niece!" said my uncle, putting me sternly from him.

I saw I was condemned, and that my aunt was believed. I became pale as a corpse. Yet I resolved to make another effort to justify myself.

"Dear uncle," I said, clasping my hands, "have you ever found me in a falsehood?"

"This is unbearable," cried my aunt, rising as if to go.

"Sit still, Sarah," ejaculated my uncle, and turning to me, he added sternly, "and you, Mary, cease these reflections on your aunt."

The blood went back to my heart. I felt that my doom was sealed. An impassable gulf seemed suddenly to yawn between me and that uncle hitherto so loved. My suffering childhood came up to my memory. I felt alone again in the

world. I prayed inwardly for strength to carry me through the interview.

My uncle continued to regard me; at last he said,

"I do not know you, to-night, Mary. I have hitherto found you affectionate, respectful, and, I believed, grateful. I have heard of your self-will and temper as a child, but I began to think that you had outgrown these evil passions. I now discover my mistake——"

I made a movement as if to speak; but he waived me to be silent, and continued,

"Though I introduced Thornton here, intending him to be your husband, and though you have not been kept ignorant of this wish of mine, yet I have never urged you to marry him, but have left things to take their course. I wished you to have time. I knew him to be superior to most young men, to belong to an old family, and to have a large fortune. I was aware that such a combination of advantages could never be presented in any other suitor; and I felt that you yourself would see this, and, like a girl of sense, as I believed you to be, would accept Thornton in the end. I am shocked to find my error. Your aunt tells me that you refused him last spring, and that you have now repeated it."

He stopped, as if he expected me to speak.

"Though Thornton is all you say," I stammered, "he lacks character; and, therefore, I cannot love him."

"Is the girl crazy, or novel-struck?" said my uncle, turning to my aunt impatiently.

"She is in love with Carrington," replied my aunt, with a shrug of the shoulders.

I would have given worlds to have been able to deny this: but the impossibility of doing it—for I would not utter a falsehood even to save my pride—embarrassed me.

"Once for all," said my uncle, returning to me, "I will have no nonsense. You are no longer a child, Mary, but a woman: and I expect, and demand from you the reasonableness of an adult. I have taken you as my own child, and intend still to be a father to you; but in return I look for the duty and confidence of a daughter. If you were literally, as you are by adoption, my child, I should command you to marry Thornton. I *do* now command you to marry him. If you refuse, I shall consider every thing at an end between us: I shall look on you as having returned ingratitude for kindness; I shall consider you also, what I never yet have done, a fool. From what you said about matrimony when you first came in, I perceive you have imbibed some fantastical notions on the subject, which must have originated in reading novels and poetry. Now I will have no such stuff in any one about me. The principal thing

in marriage is good temper and money; without that there is care and quarrelling enough, I have no doubt; but with an amiable and wealthy husband like Thornton there is no danger of more than the ordinary troubles of life, and these no sort of a marriage can avert."

He paused again, but I had nothing to say. However my aunt remarked as she unrolled her yarn.

"In the married as in the single state, there are difficulties, as you well say, brother; but any person, who is guided by a proper sense of duty, will never complain. Duty should teach Mary, too, to marry Thornton. It is the great sin of the day for children to set up their own wills against the commands of their superiors."

My uncle continued. He really loved me, and in his way wished to please me: he thought to do it by reasoning with me.

"I'm afraid from what your aunt says, Mary, as well as from your own confession, that you have allowed yourself to become slightly interested in Carrington. He is, I own, a young man of talent; but he is poor, very poor; and it will be years before he can support a wife. He certainly does not love *you*, or he would still be visiting here; for a penniless lawyer, believe me, never gives up the acquaintance of a reputed heiress, if he has the least liking for her, and thinks she will smile on him. But suppose he did still visit here, that he loved you, in a word that you were married. How would you live? As I tell you, he is poor. Do you know what poverty is? I can inform you, for I was once poor myself. It is to be slighted by those inferior to you in everything but wealth; to be daily compelled to deny yourself comforts that you need; and to be harassed continually with the fear of illness without means to remunerate a physician, or with the dread of absolute starvation for want of employment. Suppose yourself married to a poor lawyer like Carrington, with your habits of luxury, and yet compelled to live on an income less, perhaps, than that of a day-laborer. What could you do? Could you consent to inhabit a single room, up some dirty court, and be your own drudge? You would have children; could you carry a fretful, perhaps sick infant in your arms, while you prepared your husband's meal, or swept the apartment? All this the day-laborer's wife does; she *has* to do it; but neither your physical strength, nor your tastes could ever make you contented with such a lot. Before you had endured this life for a month, you would hate the husband who had inveigled you into it: before you had suffered thus for a year, you would curse the hour that you first saw him, if not the one that beheld your birth. Nay! more: is it pardonable, is it not a crime, to bring innocent beings, under such

circumstances, into the world, to inherit the sickly constitutions and low social state which such imprudent marriages entail on offspring? For, thus harassed, your husband would never rise in a profession, that now-a-days demands, not only intellect, and long study, but a man's undivided energies to ensure advancement. Ten to one but the ardent lover would sink into the neglectful husband, and seeking relief in stimulants for his cares, would die a drunkard, like hundreds have under similar circumstances."

He stopped. My tears were falling fast. The picture he drew, had never presented itself to me. Abject poverty, in connexion with Carrington, would have terrified me, but more for him than for myself. Privations I would have been willing to undergo, for affection would have sweetened them, and in the self-denial they would have demanded, my character, I felt, would have improved. But absolute beggary—from *that* I shrank!

Moreover the argument of my uncle re-assured me that Carrington did not love me; for, as my uncle said, "why, if he did love, should he cease visiting me?"

And yet I could see no reason, since I could never marry Carrington, why I should marry Thornton. Matrimony without love, disguised as it might be, seemed to me only a kind of legal prostitution. I replied to my uncle in as forcible a manner as I could, and concluded by saying,

"With such ideas of the solemnity of the marriage relation, I cannot, *cannot*, uncle, unite myself to Thornton. What you say of Carrington is unnecessary; for he does not love me; and we shall, I trust, never meet again. But if I ever did love a man, and circumstances prevented my marrying him, I would, until he proved unworthy, remain faithful to him; for I would rather be single all my life, I would rather work day and night, even starve itself, than unite myself to another merely for a livelihood. Such a fate would be worse than death."

I covered my face with my hands, shuddering at the picture my imagination had conjured up.

My stubborn persistence in refusing Thornton had, by this time, angered my uncle beyond control, the more because he had fancied, from my tears, that his representations had persuaded me; and the disappointment tended to increase his irritation.

He had walked angrily about while I spoke, occasionally stopping to frown at me; then biting his lip, he would continue his movement. He now came close up to me. It was the first and last time I ever saw him lose entire control over himself.

"I believe, by God, that you are mad—mad enough for a lunatic asylum," he cried. "Silence!" he added, in a voice of thunder, as I would have

spoken. "You are a fool at any rate. You have, however, made your choice; and, from this hour, I disown you. In trusting to your gratitude and affection I have made a pretty dupe of myself. I will not send you out into the world to starve; but as you are no longer my heiress, you must content yourself with a different mode of life hereafter; as for your remaining in my house, that is impossible. I will give you three hundred dollars a year until you marry; and my advice is that you go back to the Valley Farm, or," and here again he lost command of himself, "to the devil, I don't care which."

He turned to leave the room; but I seized his coat. He wheeled sharply around. For a minute I could not speak: my mouth seemed dried up, as if by lightning; but, at last, just as he was forcibly removing my hands from his garment, I said huskily,

"I do not want your money—I can do without it—you have broken my heart—oh! God forgive us all, uncle——"

"And you would have broken mine," he answered, with an oath, "if it had not been tougher than a puling school-girl's."

He said this in a tone, half bitter, half sneering; wrenched my hands from his coat; flung me away; and was gone, the moment after.

My aunt, during the latter part of this interview, sat methodically knitting, so that I had forgotten her presence entirely. She now reminded me of it by looking up and speaking.

"And what do you expect to do now, Miss?" she said. "Find out Carrington—tell him you were turned out of doors for his sake—get him to marry you—and come back here, a few years hence, with a house full of children for us to support?"

There was a taunting, insolent air in her tone, that made me turn upon her like a hunted tigress. Moved by my uncle's evident suffering, I had just been on the point of bursting into tears; but now I would have died rather than have exhibited the least trace of regret.

I drew my tall figure up haughtily. My eyes flashed. My voice fairly hissed, as I said, dwelling on each word,

"Never! I will die—inch by inch—with starvation—but never accept a crust of bread from you, even if offered."

My aunt quailed before that terrible exhibition of passion, or of outraged dignity, whatever it may be called.

Her knitting fell from her hands into her lap, and she gazed at me like one thunderstruck. She was white as a grave-cloth.

I kept my eye on her for more than a minute, feeling to the full its magnetic power over her: then, with a contemptuous curl of the lip, I turned

my back on her and walked steadily to the door.

But when once in my own room, where no mortal eye could look on me, then my tears flowed uncontrollably! Those who have always had a home however humble, know nothing of the anguish which attends the orphan, who feels herself alike homeless and friendless. When I thought of what I would have to endure in the struggle for a livelihood, I wished myself at rest in the grave.

I had often recurred, with a shudder, to the days of misery I had spent at the old Valley Farm; but now, in the prospect of my present lot, I almost longed to bring my childhood back again. I had then been so young as to be comparatively insensible to much of the hardness of my fate; but now I was at that age when poverty and friendlessness fall with most crushing weight upon those of my sex. From being a reputed heiress, the centre of admirers, and the favorite of my uncle, I had become, in a single hour, a homeless outcast. No more for me were the delights of society, or the refinements and ease which wealth afford! I would have to labor for a livelihood—how I knew not as yet.

For I indulged no hope of my uncle relenting. Nor could I bring myself to accept his assistance. I said to myself, perhaps with too much pride, that I could not live on his bounty while he thought me ungrateful.

Oh! how I wished, then, that my father had been able to have left me some pittance, no matter how slight, to save me from poverty in a strait like this.

There are thousands of my sex in this wide country, to say nothing of other lands, whom the want of an income, however little, compels to hateful marriages, or, what is worse, to the loss of that honesty and independence of soul which is a crown of glory to woman as well as man. So long as we are at the mercy of others for the means of living, so long are too many of us the slaves of those others. I never, to this day, hear the too common remark, "she married him for a home, you know," without my heart bleeding for the sister thus sacrificed, for the destiny thus marred, for the soul thus lost perhaps forever.

What wild emotions rushed through my brain on that night! What dreams of the old churchyard where my mother lay, and what longings to be at rest on her bosom as when a babe! Gradually, from the wild chaos of sensation, my heart turned to her dear memory. All through life the recollection of her had been a balm to my soul in its hours of trouble; and I was wont to fancy that her spirit hovered around me. I clasped my hands now and cried tearfully.

"Mother, dear mother, look upon thy orphan

child. In my agony I turn to thee. If indeed thou dost watch over me, guide me now in this time of deep distress. And oh! thou Almighty Parent," I ejaculated, fervently, feeling all at once that aid would come from on high, "thou who hast promised to be the friend of the fatherless, assist me to do what is right, and uphold me, in the sinking waters, with thy potent arm."

I felt wonderfully refreshed after this petition. My tears ceased to flow. My path seemed to open before me.

Yes! I found consolation. It appeared to my, perhaps over-excited mind, that my mother's spirit, commissioned from heaven, whispered peace to my soul.

I began to plan what I should do. I knew that thousands of my sex, as feeble and as delicately nurtured as myself, were earning their livelihood all over this broad land. Many of these had fewer accomplishments than myself. Many had to support, in addition to themselves, bed-ridden parents, lame little brothers, or insane sisters—I had heard of such self-sacrificing beings often. Some, reared in a luxury that rivalled that of princes, had been plunged by their father's bankruptcy, into abject beggary, and were now earning a scanty livelihood by working sixteen hours daily with the needle.

And should I shrink from my destiny? Where was the heroism that I had always extolled as noblest of all things in man or woman? Now was the time to prove whether I had any of this heroism. Heaven, for its own wise purposes, had called on me to cease idling away my time in luxurious repose, and had commanded me to step down into the dusty highway of life. Should I falter? God forbid!

I remembered that I had, in the neighboring city of —, an old friend, one of my own sex, the sole child of a widowed mother. Both parent and daughter were poor, and the latter supported herself and mother by dress-making. I had become acquainted with Ellen Pope, when I first went to my uncle's, from her having come to the house to make my dresses; her sweetness, patience and industry had recommended her to me subsequently not less than her skill; and I had continued to employ her until, about a year before, when she had removed to —. To her I resolved to go. My pride—weak creatures are we even when actuated by the best motives—forbade my remaining where I would be known: I chose to grapple with the grim unknown of poverty among strangers, and in a strange place.

Yet not entirely among strangers; for I felt that in Ellen and her mother I should find friends; and that they would give me advice as to what was best to do.

To determine was to act. The early line for

— left at daybreak. At that hour none of our family were up, and I could leave the house unobserved, for I wished to conceal whither I went.

I packed up a little necessary apparel, and that of the plainest; counted out my pocket money, which I calculated would pay my fare, and support me for a month; and then sat down and wrote a letter to my uncle. I told him, in few words, how I regretted that his wishes and my sense of duty conflicted; but, since there was this collision, I could not, I said, accept his bounty. I would go out and struggle with the world for myself. If I had done wrong in refusing him obedience, God would yet, I trusted, show me my error: but meantime I had nothing to ask, except that he would sometimes think of his sister's orphan child. I stopped here and folded up the letter. Suddenly I recollected that my uncle might take my words for an appeal to his mercy: so I unclosed the epistle, and added a postscript to the effect that it would be useless to seek my retreat.

Then I lay down to sleep. But slumber fled from my pillow. About four o'clock, on a cold wintry morning, I arose, lit my candle and dressed. Just as the clock struck five, I took my little bundle, stole down stairs softly, slipped the letter under the door of my uncle's chamber, and quietly made my exit from the house. I had just half an hour to spare.

It was a blustering morning. Wild, damp-looking clouds were flying close over the chimney tops, while squalls of snow occasionally whitened the pavements. After walking a square, I saw a solitary cab slowly facing the tempest. I called it, stepped in, and was soon at the depot.

The cars had scarcely started, when the snow began to fall fast. The road, before we had gone many miles, was almost blocked up. The huge engine labored heavily, and frequently was brought to a stand. On such occasions it became necessary to go back a space, in order to obtain an impetus to force the train through the snow-drifts.

Meantime the cars were intensely cold; for I write of a period before stoves were introduced into them. Nor did we get anything to eat all day. I was half frozen, hungry, and nearly broken down in spirits, when, at nightfall, we reached —, several hours after we should have arrived there.

Fortunately I had Ellen's address, having occasionally corresponded with her. I procured a carriage, for which I paid three fares, but I could not stand bargaining in the cold with the insolent driver, who laughed at my helplessness while he cheated me, and proceeded at once to the abode of the Popes.

We drove through a great thoroughfare, brilliant with lights and shops. Continually gay sleighs covered with buffalo-robcs, and ringing with bells, larted by us, drawn by blood-horses. A week before I had been driven, in exactly such an equipage, by a young millionaire of my uncle's acquaintance. But now I was jolted, a penniless outcast, in a faded, decayed old carriage, over the streets of a strange town, in which I had but a single friend. Tears filled my eyes, notwithstanding every effort to check them.

Directly we turned into a broad, handsome street, lined on either side with stately dwellings. Curtains of lace or damask hung at the windows, through which flashed the warm red fire-light: and occasionally the sound of happy laughter penetrated the storm from within those mansions. All this made me feel inexpressibly desolate.

We drove on. Gradually the houses become less elegant; grocery-stores appeared at the corners; long rows of illy-built tenements, obviously constructed to rent, next came in sight; and then old frame-buildings, with tumble-down stables here and there, and open lots yawning between, followed, betokening an approach to the poorer quarters of the city. The lights grew dimmer as we approached. The snow, no longer swept from the side-walks, lay trodden dirtily into a narrow foot-path. Gin-shops grew frequent. And, now and then, miserable beings, wrapped in ragged cloaks, went by with old, battered baskets, in which were half consumed cinders that had been gathered from the refuse ashes left on the sidewalks by the carmen.

My heart felt sick as I saw all this. The reality of poverty far surpassed my worst expectations.

At last, turning down a narrow street, the carriage drew up before a two story brick-house, the lower portion of which was occupied by a petty grocery-store. The windows up stairs were dark and comfortless.

"This cannot be the place," I said, shrinking back in terror, as the driver opened the door.

"This is the number, Miss, where you told me to go," replied the man, holding the door open so that the snow whirled into my face; and he continued insolently, "if it is not the place, I must have two dollars more for carrying you to the right one: we always charge a new fare every time we stop."

"Go and inquire if Mrs. Pope, and her daughter live anywhere about here," I said, sternly, and with the resolution of despair.

He went into the grocery-store, and coming back, in a minute, said that Mrs. Pope lived up stairs. Two or three men followed him to the door of the shop, and a half-grown, dirty servant

girl, holding in her hand some bacon between two bits of brown paper, came to the carriage-steps and stared curiously up into my face.

Directly Mrs. Pope made her appearance, pushing her way through the shop. The instant I recognized her, I sprang out, meeting her at the door. When the light flashed on my face, and she saw who her visitor was, she started back, and cried, holding up both her hands.

"Miss Lennox!"

She was too amazed to say more.

I seized her arm. "Take me to your room," I said, with much agitation, shrinking from the coarse men about me, "where is Ellen? For heaven's sake, hurry."

"Here's your bundle, Miss," said the driver, throwing it after me, "we don't steal people's clothes, if we do charge pretty well on a night like this." And he chuckled insolently.

I grasped Mrs. Pope for support, and followed her nearly fainting, through the shop, and up a narrow stairs, to a low, small back room, where Ellen, frightened, met us at the door. I fell into her arms insensible.

When I was restored to consciousness, which the kind assiduities of my friends soon effected, I found both Ellen and her mother bending over me, curiosity and astonishment struggling in their faces with sympathy.

I soon told my tale, at least as much of it as I could, in honor to others. My acquaintance with Carrington, however, I concealed, as also the name of Thornton.

"How cruel!" said Ellen's mother, all her womanly sympathies aroused anew in my favor, "because you would not marry a man you did not love, you have been disinherited."

But suddenly she stopped. The hard experiences of the world, gathered during a poverty of sixty years, came up to her recollection, her face grew sad and thoughtful, and she added, though hesitatingly, "but, my dear child, do you know what you have undertaken?"

"I am a woman," I replied, "and can work, like thousands less happily situated. I can teach music, or be a dress-maker, and, if these fail, take in plain sewing."

Ellen, who had been sitting on the edge of the bed where I lay, for they had carried me into the sleeping apartment, pressed my hands at these words, while tears gathered into her eyes.

Her mother, still thoughtful, shook her head doubtfully.

"Ah! Miss Lennox," she said, "you don't know what you have undertaken. You are delicate, proud, unaccustomed to labor, every thing is against you. I am old, and know the world, and, therefore, speak frankly—I fear, my dear, you have done wrong."

"Oh, mother!" cried Ellen.

I rose up, for her words made me strong.

"I have not done wrong, Mrs. Pope," I replied, "and no stranger shall ever find me a burden. It is true, I might have accepted my uncle's pension, and so lived without labor; but I would have degraded myself in my own eyes. I *can* support myself, and I *will*: I know I have energies——"

"Oh! yes, you have," interrupted Ellen, again pressing my hand, "for most women, in your situation, would have weakly accepted your uncle's offer. I honor you for refusing it; and so does mother too; she only fears your bodily strength may prove unequal to the heroic resolution of your soul."

"That is indeed all I meant," interposed Mrs. Pope, seeing I was about to speak. "I did not think to hurt you, by what I said. You are welcome, a thousand times, here. I only foresaw the bodily suffering before you, the mortification to your pride, the loneliness of one without family, and the hundred other miseries of your new condition. Oh! Miss Mary, you don't know what it is to be poor. And yet you were right, I know, in refusing to marry the rich gentleman."

I continued.

"I have done my duty, and, in justice to my own convictions, I could not do less. If my life is to be a hard one; if my frail body gives way; if the worst miseries of poverty and sickness overtake me—let them come!"

Both Ellen and her mother were now weeping, the latter aloud.

I was transported with enthusiasm as I spoke. All that I had ever read of suffering martyrs came to me in that moment, and I was prepared for death itself.

"You are nervous, overwrought, you want sleep and rest," said Ellen, soothingly. "Dear Miss Lennox, undress now, and go to bed."

"And I will bring you some tea and toast, and anything else you would like. I dare say you have eaten nothing to-day," said her mother.

It was true, I had not: I had been in too excited a state.

I was lying in bed, talking to Ellen more composedly, she holding my hand and lovingly pressing it, when her mother returned with some tea and toast, and a bit of broiled chicken, a rare luxury, I did not doubt, with them.

"There, eat, my dear young lady," she said, in a tone to make amends for her former apparent cruelty, "you will hereafter be one of us; we will love you and cherish you; and, before long, that is when you get able, we will find plenty for you to do."

What a look of gratitude Ellen gave her mother for these words!

The tears came into my eyes, as I took the tea-cup from Mrs. Pope, while Ellen began to cut off small mouthfuls of the fowl for me.

"Eat, and don't talk," said Mrs. Pope, kindly, but authoritatively. "You are too excited already. When you have eaten all this," she added, smiling, "all, and not a bit less, we shall leave you alone, so that you may sleep: and, to-morrow, you are not to rise until I call you."

It was nearly noon, the next day, when I awoke. Physical and mental fatigue had rendered my sleep as profound almost as death. But I arose refreshed. The incidents of the last day, too, appeared to me like those of a dream.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## THE VALLEY FARM; OR, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ORPHAN.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by Charles J. Peterson, as the proprietor, in the Clerk's Office, of the District Court of the U. S., in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 178.

I PASS over nearly a week, during which I became habituated, in a measure, to my new home.

It was agreed that Ellen should inquire among her patrons if a music teacher was wanted, my proficiency on the piano being sufficient, I thought, to warrant my taking a few pupils. Meantime, I produced my purse, and insisted on paying for my board. This arranged, I assumed a new name; for I wished to conceal every trace by which I could be recognized.

Yet there was much in this mode of life that was distasteful to me. I had been long accustomed to more delicate food, and now that my health was indifferent, I often turned with loathing from the plain dishes to which Ellen and her mother were forced usually to restrict themselves. But a cup of tea and toast could generally be had, and these formed my meals for much of the time.

There were other things that annoyed and even irritated me, by offending my morbidly refined tastes: small things, like the service of the table, and other petty inconveniences. Perhaps, if I had been in health, I would have disregarded these things. But my nervous system was completely disorganized, and those who have suffered in a similar way know that, at such times, the slightest vexations overcome us.

Everything indeed was neat, though plain. But the constant, watchful economy I saw, and which I should have called meanness a month before, annoyed me, even though I knew its justice. For instance, the stove was never allowed to consume more than a certain quantity of coal daily, and in consequence there were often hours when the room was really cold. Being in ill health, I felt this more than did Mrs. Pope, for Ellen was generally absent all day.

The second Sunday after my arrival, I accompanied Ellen, for the first time, to church.

We went alone, Mrs. Pope remaining at home, on account of feeling unwell. The day was bitterly cold, and I noticed that Ellen had no cloak, but only a shawl, such indeed as would have

answered in October, but entirely too thin for this, one of the coldest days of mid-winter. I soon saw that she was suffering from the cold: her lips grew blue, her teeth chattered, and she shivered continually.

"How imprudent," I said, "and with your cough, to come out in that slight shawl."

I spoke somewhat severely, for my temper was now easily ruffled, as I have said.

She turned her mild, blue eyes on me, and answered, "it is the thickest shawl I have, and my cloak is worn out. I intended, last winter, to buy me a new cloak for this season, and so, when spring came, cut up my old one; but mother has been sick so much that to pay the doctor's bill took all my money, and so I have had to go without a cloak. And this shawl is not so very cold, after all."

She smiled faintly as she spoke, drawing the shawl closer around her, but, in spite of her words and the accompanying gesture, her teeth chattered.

How my heart smote me! Here I had been, day after day, secretly indulging my pettishness at annoyances which existed only in imagination, while this more delicate and suffering girl had been making, without a murmur, serious sacrifices, and such even as compromised her health. I felt the tears gush into my eyes, but, before I could answer, we were at the church door.

I had not asked Ellen to what denomination she belonged, but I knew the instant we entered. The open benches; the two sexes separated by the aisles; the plain furniture of the pulpit; and the number of working-men, arrayed in holiday suits, informed me at once. I whispered to Ellen: "You never told me you were a Methodist."

"Nor am I entirely," she replied. "I was brought up in another sect; but I come here because the seats are free; and that, you know, is something to one who is poor. But hush!—the minister."

I looked up. There, mounting the pulpit stairs, was the burly form of the Rev. Mr. N——, the preacher at the camp-meeting.

More than eighteen months had passed since I had seen the speaker, but he had scarcely changed at all in appearance. The same massive brow, the same penetrating eye, the same crisp, iron-gray looks were there: and when he began to speak, there too were the same rich, magnetic tones of voice!

Every word of his sermon is distinct in my memory; for it dwelt on the nobleness of suffering for the truth's sake, and was full of exhortation to persevere. Had it been intended for me personally it could not have been more appropriate. The text was from the fourth chapter of Corinthians, the sixteenth and seventeenth verses: *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward is renewed day by day: for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."*

Having read this text in his impressive manner, the preacher proceeded to speak of the trials of those who suffered for the truth; and here my heart went with him in every word he uttered! But he soon stripped off the self-sufficiency with which I began to listen to him.

"All this, my brethern," he exclaimed, "is noble and commendable, when the strife is for the right, and God is on our side. But what shall we say of those who scorning the aid of the Almighty, think to conquer in their own puny strength? Who set themselves up to do battle, in the mere pride of intellect, against the trials of this world? Alas! too soon they find that the heroism with which they set out has deserted them; their high spirit becomes broken by misfortune; and they perish, at last, in the unequal conflict. Like Peter, they faint and sink, and unless they call on God for aid, the deep waters go over them! To the Christian, earthly sorrows are indeed light afflictions, and work out, at last, a far more exceeding weight of glory. But to the others, who rely on their own strength, the sorrows of this world become, sooner or later, more than can be borne. As well, my brethren, might a man rush on the thick bosses of the Almighty's buckler, as attempt, single-handed, unless God was on his side, to buffet the trials of life."

In hearing these words, I felt the true source of my weakness. I had depended too much on myself, too little on the Creator: and hence my repinings. I saw into my own heart, and was abashed before my Maker.

"And who is this Almighty Being, on whom you are asked to rely?" continued the speaker. "Is he some angry Jupiter, or vacillating Mars, divinities of ancient Greece? Is he some brutal god, a Dagon of the Philistines? Is he some drunken warrior, the woden of the Scandinavians?

Is he some ordinary man, a great reformer. It is true, yet only an ordinary man, as certain, in our day, in their pride of intellect, declare? What," and here, pausing, his lightning eye a-blaze, he exclaimed, "what, Jesus of Nazareth an ordinary man? An ordinary man this, when an angel announced his conception, and myriads of heavenly messengers heralded his birth. An ordinary man! At Cana of Galilee the subject elements acknowledged him supreme, and the water at his bidding crimsoned into wine. An ordinary man! Beside the open grave he stood, and crying, 'Lazarus, come forth,' immediately putrefaction trembled into life. An ordinary man! When nailed upon the cross, the heavens hid themselves from the sacreligious sight; the dead burst their cerements in horror; the dumb veil of the temple rent itself into twain; and at the cry of 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani,' earth shuddered to her furthest extremities, and distant continents exclaimed, 'surely a God is dying.' An ordinary man *this*!"

The orator pausing, again glanced around the assembly, and a deep respiration rose from the congregation. Every hearer had been bound, as in a spell, by the eloquence of the speaker.

Ah! I saw now that it required more than pride, more than a consciousness of right, to fight the battle of life—it required true religion.

I was still overpowered by this sermon, when, in leaving the church, a deep voice addressed Ellen, who was at my side. I turned and beheld the preacher.

"How is that cough?" he said, kindly. "You must take care of it, my daughter, or it will prove a sore trial to your mother."

Ellen answered and introduced me. Something in my manner, which was oppressed and pre-occupied, appeared to strike him: he conversed with us for several moments with interest, and then saying that he would visit us during the week, took his departure. All this time, a carriage, owned by one of the rich members of his congregation, had been waiting for him, perhaps to carry him to dinner.

"It is always so with him," said Ellen, as we moved away. "He makes the rich wait rather than the poor: in his own words, his first care is for the desolated and oppressed. Oh! he is so good."

"And so eloquent," I answered. "Have you known him long?"

"He has been settled here since last conference."

"He seems to take an interest in you."

"And in you too, I think: I know you will love him."

On Tuesday evening he came, evidently choosing this hour because he knew Ellen was engaged



during the day. I found him as affable in private as he was eloquent in the pulpit. Yet he never forgot his vocation; and though genial, and sometimes even playful as a child, he had always before him "the mark of his high calling." He was indeed truly a Christian minister.

Under his teachings, I soon became happy in my new vocation; for he taught me to lean on that Supreme Being in whom only is happiness. He knew I belonged to another sect than his own; but he had that wide and expansive charity which sees in the various denominations of Christians only so many roads to the same heaven. "One man marches under one banner, another under a different, but all," he said, "are travelling the same road. Sect is of little moment if the heart is right. I trust in God I shall reach Paradise at last, and there, I am sure, I shall meet, not only Enoch and other saints from before the flood, but Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; ay! and, from later times, Luther and Latimer, Bunyan, and Xavier, Baxter and St. Augustine, Jeremy Taylor, Whitfield, Wesley, and the whole glorious company of the redeemed."

A month had now elapsed, and my purse began to run low, yet all Ellen's efforts, as well as my own, to procure pupils for me had failed. Even advertising had proved unsuccessful. The established teachers of music monopolized the field, leaving no avenue open for one friendless and untried like myself.

I did not, however, waste my time in idleness. I had always had taste in dress, and now, whenever Ellen remained at home, I took lessons from her in her art, for since I could not procure a situation as music-teacher, I resolved to earn my livelihood at dress-making.

My first experience of this new vocation was disheartening enough. Like Ellen, I was to go to the houses of my employers, and not work at home; and my introductory visit was to an elegant mansion in —, where they were two fashionable daughters and their mother, patrons I was particularly desirous to conciliate, on account of their influence.

I had a long and dreary walk from my lodgings to this house, on a cold, wet morning in March, and having understood I was to breakfast in — place, had taken nothing before leaving home except a biscuit and some water. On my arrival, I was ushered into a small back chamber, upstairs, in which a fire so scanty had been lighted, that the dampness bedewed the bare walls. Here I sat alone at my work for hours, only visited occasionally by the lady of the house, and then in order that I might fit the dress which I was making. In vain I expected a summons to breakfast. I heard the bell for that meal ring, about two hours after my arrival, but no

invitation was sent to me. I paled with anger, for I was new to my situation, and forgot the vast difference between the heiress and the poor dress-maker. I looked for a cup of coffee and a plate to be sent up to me; but even this was neglected; and so the hours went by until noon.

Once the two tall and really elegant daughters of Mrs. Warren came into the room, evidently to scrutinize the new dress-maker. They did not address me, however, but only nodded condescendingly, and went on with their fashionable gossip, until the eldest, with a yawn, declared that the ball the night before had completely fatigued her, that the room was very chilly, and that she believed she would get a novel and lie down. The other echoed the assertion, that the room was cold, shrugging a pair of pretty, but immodestly bare shoulders; and so she too went out. Nobody came, however, to make up the fire; and there were no coals, for me to do it.

About an hour after noon, the bell rang for luncheon, and I was honored with the sight of the two gay daughters again, as they accompanied their mother down to the table. I was now really weak from hunger, and when I found my visitors about to depart, without inviting me to follow them, I ventured to ask for something to eat, stating that I had missed my breakfast.

The whole three stared at me for an instant, and then the mother, saying she would send me a plate of meat, bowed superciliously, and followed by the daughters, sailed out of the room. My cheeks were crimsoned with indignation. I knew myself to be the equals of these people in all respects, and their superior in many: a few months before I had even lived in as great luxury as themselves; yet now I was treated with hauteur, almost with contempt.

In a few minutes a servant came up, not with the promised plate, but to say that the dinner was ready to-day sooner than usual, and that I should please to walk down. Accordingly, I left my work and followed my guide. But, instead of turning into the dining-room, we kept on to the kitchen, when a table was set out for the servants, all but the cook, who being a colored woman, ate alone.

I drew back for an instant. My heart was in my throat, and the tears gushed to my eyes. "This degradation," I said to myself, "is deeper than I thought possible." But I reflected immediately that I must, sooner or later, accustom myself to my lot; that I was but a servant after all; and that it became not me, who felt angered at the superciliousness of the ladies of the family, to be myself contemptuous toward others. A month earlier, I should, however, have felt the insult too keenly for reflection; but now religion came to my aid; and I sat down, forcing back

the tears by a strong mental effort, and reminding my proud heart that those beside me were fellow creatures like myself, and on their way to the same eternal home. "In the eye of God we are all alike," I murmured.

The servants, with instinctive delicacy, saw and commiserated my situation. They recognized one more refined than themselves, and paid me a silent, deferential attention, in strong contrast to the cold hauteur I had witnessed above stairs. The choicest bits on the table were selected and laid in my plate; my wishes were anticipated; and the usual gossip of a servants' table was exchanged for a courteous silence. Such considerate attentions brought the tears almost into my eyes. "Ah! the poor know how to appreciate the poor," I said.

How I got through that day I hardly can tell. I sewed on, all through the afternoon, my tears falling faster than the rain outside. Mortification and shame were combatting in my heart with considerations of prudence and the consolations of religion. Now my pride rebelled, and I rose to leave the house. Now I reflected that these daily slights were a part of the cares I had, like all my race, to bear. A painful, public death I could have endured, but this silent, unseen suffering was what appalled me. Ah! man may boast of his firmness on the rack, his heroism in the flames; but there are hundreds of my sex, at this hour, going through a more terrible martyrdom, with none to applaud, none even to witness their agony.

Toward evening I grew more composed. With the morning came refreshed spirits and a determination to persevere. I went back to — Place, and worked there a week. Seven days they were of intense suffering, of almost hourly conflicts with myself; but at their close I felt like one who has been sorely tempted, yet has triumphed gloriously.

My vocation was not, however, always a bitter one. In many families I was recognized as an equal, and in some I found sincere friends. My musical accomplishments gradually became known, and I was offered a few pupils, but as the number was not sufficient to support me, I resolved, for a time at least, to adhere to my present mode of life.

In all this interval I heard nothing of my family. I had, by my flight to a strange city, and by my change of name, effectually concealed myself from search, if any had been undertaken. Yet I longed often to learn whether my uncle was well or ill. Of him especially I frequently thought. I loved him still, notwithstanding his injustice; and sometimes I even asked myself if I had done entirely right by him. "Were I now to return, and bear more with his infirmities," I

said, "might I not be restored to his heart?" There was no weakness in this, no change in my fixed purpose never to marry for lucre, but only the promptings of a softened, and, I hoped, a better heart.

Nor had I heard of Carrington. I often, however, thought of him, or rather of the ideal which he had filled, up to the moment of his wanton desertion. Sometimes relenting toward him, I reflected that it might have been timidity on his part, rather than fickleness, which had led him to abandon me. "Perhaps he thought me too proud," I would say, "or he might have feared the heiress would despise his suit; or foreseeing the opposition of my family, he may have withdrawn to save me from a conflict between duty and love." At such seasons, my heart would flutter wildly; a delicious languor steal over all my nerves; and I would begin to dream vain and impossible dreams, until Ellen's voice, or the sight of my work in my lap, would re-call me to the stern realities of life.

I was, one day, reminded of Carrington, however, in a way that shook my nerves for a fortnight.

It was a day in autumn, for I had now been nearly a year with Ellen, when hurrying home, toward dusk, I saw two gentlemen approaching me. One I recognized as my friend, the Rev. Mr. N—. The other—could it be?—yes! it was Carrington. At once I felt my knees totter, but rallying my strength I boldly advanced, wondering what strange chance had brought my old lover and Mr. N— together. As I drew near, I saw they were in earnest conversation, and the latter did not recognize me. Carrington seemed at first, however, to know me; for he started and half raised his hat; but after a perplexed look withdrew his hand from his head, and passed without recognition. But when I looked back, after I had gone a few steps, I saw both he and Mr. N— gazing after me, and the latter, seeing I noticed him, bowed. They then walked on.

I reached home in a flutter of spirits indescribable. I must have walked very fast, for I was completely overcome. Ellen and her mother both noticed my flushed cheeks and agitated manner, but they could get nothing out of me in spite of their inquiries; the truth was my acquaintance with Carrington was a sacred secret, and I had, therefore, nothing to tell.

I felt a presentiment that Mr. N— would come to see me, for his manner of bowing assured me that Carrington had directed his attention to me. A few evenings after he made his appearance. Fortunately for his purpose, both Ellen and her mother were out: a fact, I believe, he knew before, as they had gone to attend a church society, of which they were members.

After some general conversation my visitor approached the subject which was on his mind.

"You met me the other night," he said, "when I was with a young friend, who almost insisted that he knew you, or rather had known you, under another name. Have you ever lived in —?"

He said this abruptly, and with his eyes fixed on me. I was embarrassed. I could not tell any of the truth, without telling all, and I was, therefore, silent.

"Well," he said, "I will not press the question, for I see you do not wish to answer. But Mr. Carrington was positive that there could not be two faces like yours in the world."

How my heart leaped! What could such language mean but that he often thought of me? I still remained silent, and my visitor continued, as if half soliloquizing,

"A remarkable young man is this friend of mine, brimful of talent, and with a heart, I believe, in the right place. Though scarcely beyond the requisite age, he has just been chosen to Congress, from one of the districts of —, having carried the election, as an independent candidate, against two rivals backed by all the force of the old parties. He made my acquaintance in the most singular manner."

I looked up, full of curiosity, my eye meeting the speaker's for the first time since his abrupt question. He went on.

"It was many years ago, at a camp-meeting in the mountains—near the B— Springs—you have heard of them, I suppose. He had listened to a sermon which made him, he said, desirous to know me. This led to a conversation in which I found my acquaintance a man of singular ability, with a heart and head finely balanced, and immense stores of information for one comparatively so young. After this I lost sight of him for years. Then I met him again, the most rising young man in —."

I still listened, and now with breathless interest.

"We saw each other after this, always when I went to —, or he came here; and I found reason, at every interview, to increase my already high estimate of his powers. I do not wonder he was elected to Congress so young, and against such competition, for his eloquence is magical and his patriotism exalted. In some respects he is remarkable. He has been here, to attend a great trial, and, after the court had closed, the day you met us, came, by accident, into the church, where an anniversary was being held. I happened to see him, for I sat on the stage. One of our speakers had disappointed us, but, knowing that Carrington favored the great cause in which we were engaged, I went down and solicited him to speak. He was unwilling at first,

for he is modest, but when I placed the request before him as a question of duty, he consented. In five minutes the orator, then on the floor, sat down; and with only that short interval in which to prepare, Carrington arose. For half an hour he electrified the house by his eloquence. All present declared they had never listened to such an address. The venerable Dr. D—, who was to follow him, and who had carefully prepared an elaborate speech, totally changed his ground, alleging afterward jocularly that Carrington had stolen his thunder."

Soon after my visitor rose to go. As he extended his hand, he said kindly,

"My daughter, I know nothing of the secrets of your past life, nor is it right that I should seek to inquire into them; but man that is born of woman has many trials; and those that you have had will be lighter, let me assure you, if carried to the footstool of the Creator. God bless you!"

I afterward secretly obtained a copy of the paper, in which Carrington's speech had been reported, and read through the address with swimming eyes and a palpitating heart. "Can he, who utters sentiments like these," I said, "be the trifer I have believed?"

I went to sleep that night, and dreamed of being re-united to Carrington, with all his neglect and desertion explained. Happy, happy hours! I awoke, on a cold, dull November morning; walked two miles before breakfast; and sat in a close, ugly room all day, making a dress for a pettish school-girl. By nightfall I was ready to laugh at the absurdity of my visions of romance.

And now I come to a period of months, during which there was no variation in my life. I was almost constantly employed: and, with economy, earned sufficient for my support, though that sufficiency was less than what I had once been accustomed to expend as pocket-money. Of real, grinding poverty, therefore, I experienced little; but I saw Ellen continually submitting to the severest privations; for she had two persons to support instead of one, nor would she allow me to assist her. But I was frequently called to endure personal mortifications, which, to a sensitive organization, are less endurable than privation itself.

The second summer of my residence with Ellen was now drawing on. Employment, at this season of the year, was scarce, most families being out of town. Ellen and her mother had received an invitation from a cousin, who lived on a farm, to spend a few weeks with him, and had accepted. I longed to follow them, but had no place whither to go. I was fagged out with sewing, late and early, in the different families of my patrons, in order to prepare them for their summer excursions;

and I thought if I could once more breathe the fresh country air, I should be supremely happy.

The old Valley Farm recurred to my memory frequently now. A thousand times I re-called the pleasant meadows around it; the willows drooping over the brook; the dewy landscape in sight, on summer mornings, from my old nook; the martins skimming to and fro, or the pigeons cooing on the eaves; and a hundred other rural sights and sounds, with which the old place was full. In spite of the sufferings of my childhood, I still loved the antique building, with its high gables, and precipitous stoop. It had been the home of my fathers for many generations; it was there I myself was born; and but for a hard law, which drew an invidious distinction between the sexes, it would have been mine now. But what, before all things else, endeared it to me was that there my mother had died; there I had, in the deep sorrows of my childhood, invoked her aid from heaven; and there, on many a blessed night, I had seen her in my dreams bending smilingly from Paradise, and bidding me be of good cheer, for that the darkness should not always encompass me.

And once I had given full faith to these promises. During the happy years I had spent at my uncle's I had recognized their truth; but alas! since then the gloom had settled around my path as thickly as ever; and, with maturer wisdom, I saw that these sweet prophecies had been only dreams after all. And yet how happy life is made by such dreams!

But I wander from my narrative. Let it suffice to say that my desire to be again in the country induced me, early in June, to accept an invitation from Mrs. Warren to accompany her to her husband's country-seat, in the mixed capacity of dress-maker for her elder, and musical teacher to her younger daughters.

"Julia and Isabel," she said, "will require to have their dresses occasionally altered, besides new ones made up, for we shall have a good deal of company; Arethusa and Josephine will be benefitted by keeping up their practice, and, though you have not the touch of Berelli, you will answer for the summer."

I have not yet described Mrs. Warren. She had been a belle when younger, and still retained traces of her beauty, though now she was grown so thin that all the once rounded outlines of her person and countenance were gone. But she still possessed a mass of dark, silky hair, which was always dressed plainly; and large, black eyes that would have been perfectly beautiful, but for a cat-like gleam they occasionally exhibited. Mrs. Warren was generally attired in black silk, as becoming a matron with two grown up daughters. Her voice, like her eyes, was

suggestive of treachery; for though modulated with great art, it scarcely ever rose above a whisper; in a word it wanted sincerity. And indeed the manner in which I frequently heard her speak to her daughters, of her best friends, proved that, under her mask of politeness, she was envious, gossiping, deceitful and malicious.

To accept this somewhat anomalous situation, under such a woman, was running a great risk, but I was virtually compelled to it, for I had no other offer, and leave town I must. The wages I was promised, too, were extremely paltry; for Mrs. Warren was one of those fashionable ladies who make up for extravagances on themselves, by cutting down the remuneration of those they employ. But I determined, notwithstanding all, to go.

Warren Hall was a noble old place. It had been in the family for three generations, and possessed what can be found attached to but few country-seats in America, large and extensive grounds, sufficient indeed to have been called a park even in England. The house was built of dressed stone, and was nearly a century old, but having been almost Palladian in its character at the original erection, it was still large enough; and, with a few improvements in-doors, answered its purpose better than any modern structure, however imposing, would have done; for the stuccoed walls and pillared front of the latter would have been sadly out of keeping with the magnificent old trees scattered in clumps about the lawn, and with the venerable woods that screened the dwelling, in a semi-circular sweep, on the north, the north-east, and the north-west. The grey walls; the heavily framed windows; the balustrade around the roof; the quaintly carved balcony over the great hall-door; and the alternate blocks of dressed and rough stone, at the corners of the house, rising one above another to the roof, gave Warren Hall a certain air of imposing antiquity. From the first day I arrived at the old place, I loved it; and, from that moment, ceased regretting I had accompanied the Warrenes.

The house soon filled up with company, old and young, but principally the latter. I noticed, however, that there were but few ladies, except married ones, but quite a number of gay young bachelors. Most of the latter were men of fortune, and generally also of fashion; but not one of them had any true manliness; they could have been distinguished anywhere for what they were, empty fops, with whom travelling passed for experience of the world, and money stood in place of talent. I suspected immediately that they had been invited to Warren Hall in order to fall in love with Julia or Isabel.

Of this gay company, however, I saw but little.

Now and then I would meet some of the fine ladies on the stairs, or receive a stare from one of the gentlemen as we passed in the grounds, but I neither dined with the family, nor was asked into the drawing-room in the evening. My mornings were generally occupied with my two pupils, while most of my afternoons were spent in altering dresses for their elder sisters. But occasionally I had hours of leisure, and during these I wandered about the park, sometimes with a book in my hand, and sometimes without one, now stopping to rest under some spreading tree, now walking slowly down some leafy aisle, and now watching, from a high bluff overlooking the expansive river, the sun setting golden in the west. The white sails glittering as they passed, the horn of the boatmen on the canal, and the fresh evening air dallying with my cheek, made these sunset moments inexpressibly sweet. After such walks I would return to the house refreshed in spirits, forgetting the mortifications which were my lot, and, after a frugal cup of tea in the upper servants' room, would take my candle, retire to my distant chamber, and there, out of hearing of the gay company below, read until it was time to retire.

Weeks passed in this way, until, early in July, I heard one of the young ladies say, as she came into the school-room, one morning.

"I wonder, Bell, if Carrington will come, to-morrow, after all."

I was placing a piece of music on the piano, but, at these words, the sheet of paper fell from my hands. Carrington acquainted with the Warrens! Carrington coming here!

The elder young ladies did not notice my agitation, but one of my pupils did, for she cried, "la! how awkward you are," and, snatching the music from me, after I had picked it up, placed it herself on the piano.

"I don't know indeed, Jule," said Isabel, yawning, "I'm sure, for your sake, I hope he will. Though I couldn't fancy such a prig, even if he is a great man."

Isabel was as near a fool as a woman can be, and, therefore, I did not wonder at this opinion, though my cheek tingled nevertheless. Julia, however, was a dashing girl, with a good deal of intellect, perverted as it was; and I understood at once why she loved Carrington, if indeed she did; and alas! the words of her sister implied this.

I turned faint at the bare idea. Shall I be frank? I had lately been persuading myself that some inexplicable cause had led to Carrington's desertion of me, and that, though fortune had placed our ever meeting beyond the possibility of happening, he still loved me, or at least had loved me. But now all this delicious flattery,

with which I had soothed my pride, was blown to the winds. He loved Julia. He loved her so openly that her own sister spoke of it. Nor could I be surprised at this love; for was not Julia rich, beautiful, and brilliant?

And yet I could not understand how *my* Carrington could love Julia. He must have greatly changed.

"You are a little fool," said Julia, addressing her sister. "But Carrington is a fine fellow, and worth a dozen of the whiskered beaux down stairs. Have you read the great speech he has just been making at the political meeting in our city? Oh! I forgot—you never read such things. But pa says it was magnificent, and pa heard it: Carrington, he declares, will yet be a Senator: only think of that, a Senator's wife——"

I was looking at the speaker, my whole soul intent on her words, and utterly unconscious of my pupil, when, at this instant, the child pulled me by the skirt, and in a loud, chiding tone asked me why I did not go on with the lesson.

Julia started at the interruption, and, crimsoning to the forehead, stopped abruptly. Her dark eyes flashed angrily on me, for she knew I had overheard her, and though really enraged at her own imprudence, she chose to pretend it was at my listening: she muttered something, with a curl of the lip, about eaves-droppers, and then, pettishly jerking Isabel by the arm, left the room.

I went through with my task, I know not how. My thoughts were on this strange intelligence, rather than on the music; and I was glad when the lessons were over, and I could escape into the park, where I could rally my thoughts.

Carrington acquainted with the Warrens! Carrington coming here! Carrington probably engaged to Julia! These words rang through my mind continually. I could not think coherently. I scarcely knew what it all portended. Only I felt inconceivably miserable, and finally after walking so rapidly that I was out of breath, I sat down on a rustic bench, in a lonely part of the grounds, and burst into tears.

After a fit of weeping had relieved me, I began to consider the subject more calmly. I gave up Carrington at once: he could never be mine: I was insane, I said, ever to have thought otherwise. Then, by a natural revulsion, instead of regarding him in the lenient light I had lately, I re-called the old bitterness of feeling toward him, which had followed his desertion of me. "His conduct allowed of no explanation," I cried, "he intended to trifle with me all the time; and his willingness to marry such a devotee of fashion as Julia Warrenne proves his baseness."

I spoke aloud and angrily, so loud that I feared some one had heard me. I looked anxiously around. But no one was in sight.

Many hours I passed in that spot, torn continually by conflicting emotions. Now the shame of meeting Carrington again, I as a menial, he as a petted visitor, stung my proud nature to the quick: now I was a victim to the agony of seeing his attentions to another; now I reflected, my reason assuming the sway, that he would probably not see me, nor I him, our stations in the household being so different.

It was evening when I reached the house, and I stole at once to my room. Here I washed the traces of tears from my eyes, lit my candle, and sat down to read.

But I was not destined to spend the evening in the place I desired. I had been reading about an hour, when a servant knocked at my door with a message from Mrs. Warren. "Would Miss come down to the drawing-room: she was wanted there."

What could be the matter? During six weeks I had not been invited into the drawing-room once. I arose somewhat flurried, and then thought me to call back the servant and ask if she knew for what I was wanted. I felt relieved to hear that it was only to play cotillions, as a dance had been projected.

I accordingly brushed my hair anew, re-arranged my simple dress, and proceeded down stairs. Yet, as I went, I had time to reflect that it was still an odd summons, for the company had frequently danced before, on which occasion Julia had always played for them.

Carrington's arrival, I knew, could have nothing to do with it; for he was not expected until the next day: and his coming even then was doubtful, it appeared.

I entered the drawing-room unobserved, for the door was wide open; and I thus had a moment to scrutinize the company before I was myself seen. I almost thought myself, for that instant, in a new world. So long a period had elapsed since I had been in such an assembly, that its air of exquisite refinement and grace fascinated me indescribably. The light gauze tissues of the ladies gave the wearers, as they moved to and fro, the air of ethereal beings. Innumerable flowers, many of them rare exotics, filled the apartment with fragrance. A clouded light fell from the superb chandelier, throwing a dreamy haze over the room, and softening the variegated colors in the apartment, into a harmonious whole. Then the rich carpet; the damask seats; the rose-wood furniture; the pictures; the statuettes; and the hundred articles of *virtu* scattered about, what a look of elegance they gave to the whole scene! For a second I felt like one on whom an Eden had suddenly burst in all its fragrance and beauty.

At last Mrs. Warren perceiving me, said in her soft, cold voice,

"Ah! you are there, are you? I did not see you enter. I sent for you to play cotillions; will you oblige us by doing it?"

The imperious air, veiled under a thin show of courtesy, with which these words were spoken, called the blood to my cheek; and I advanced quickly to the piano, in order to conceal my flushed countenance.

There had been quite a buzz of conversation when I entered, but now this ceased, and every eye was turned on me. One or two of the gentlemen raised their eye-glasses, and continued to survey me, but the ladies, after a supercilious glance, resumed their gossip.

"I wonder where Julia is," said Mrs. Warren, looking around, "I have not seen her since dinner."

The necessity for any one to answer was obviated by the appearance of Julia herself, who, at this moment, entered the door from the hall, charmingly dressed, and looking superbly beautiful. She was accompanied by a gentleman, whose arm she did not relinquish until quite in the room. A smile of triumph was on her lips, as she gazed up into his face. I followed the glance of her eye with a sinking heart; for that manly figure seemed strangely familiar to me: nor was I misled in my supposition; I beheld Carrington before me.

Instantly all the blood in my system seemed pouring back upon my heart, and then ebbing away as rapidly: a dizziness came over me; and I would have fallen, had I not caught at the piano for support.

Fortunately every eye was occupied with Julia and her handsome companion, so that my agitation passed unobserved.

I did not entirely lose my consciousness. I heard a murmur of voices, questions asked and answered, compliments exchanged, and a banter of wits between Carrington and somebody; but I recollected nothing distinctly, except that Julia told her mother that she had been showing the park to her companion, and that Carrington replied with I knew not what, some verbal gallantry, I believe.

Then followed the arrangements for a dance: the pushing back of the chairs and *tele-a-teles* from the middle of the room, the selection of partners, and the laughing struggle between certain of the ladies for a lead. During this polite hubbub my senses recovered themselves.

I was indeed ashamed of my agitation, and inexpressibly grateful that it had passed unobserved. What! let Carrington see that he had power over me? Never!

And, perhaps, if I maintained a perfect composure, and that silent distance which my position in the family rendered easy, he might never

recognize me. I resolved, accordingly, to control myself, and to keep as much as possible out of the way.

These reflections passed through my mind, and these resolutions were formed while the dancers were taking their places. A call was now made for music. I glanced over my shoulder, and seeing that Carrington was in a quadrille at the most distant part of the room, turned to my task with relief.

I was beginning to be excited; and played, I suppose, with unusual spirit. I could hear the dancers complimenting me to each other; and once I overheard one of the gentlemen praising my figure: he did this, I am sure, on purpose that it should reach my ears; but I felt insulted and did not look around to see who he was.

The dance was over. I heard the rustling of a light dress, and Julia was beside me. She had forgotten her morning's anger, and was now all affability. "You did that charmingly," she said. "But now play a waltz, please!"

She was in the highest spirits, her eyes sparkling, a magnificent color on her cheeks.

A cold shiver ran over me. I did not dare to turn around, lest I should see Carrington leading her to the floor. I struck up a brilliant waltz, in a fit of desperation: I can call my feelings nothing else.

Neither the Polka, nor Redowa, was then in vogue: what is now called the plain waltz—the most graceful of all—was the only one danced. I heard the soft rustling of garments as the waltzers whirled behind me, and I thought I recognized Julia's light foot-fall. I played faster and more spiritedly.

At last I ventured to glance over my shoulder. Two or three couples first met my eye, and then came Julia and Isabel gliding around almost noiselessly, like two fair spirits. My eye sought Carrington. He had drawn nearer, and stood, with folded arms, his looks following every movement of Julia. And truly she was a beautiful sight. Both she and her sister were finished waltzers, but Julia especially. On this occasion, she was dressed in a thin rose-colored tissue, made in voluminous folds, that, as she whirled silently by, fell like a fleecy cloud about her. Accustomed to waltzing constantly together, the two girls moved as if one, circling softly around and around, like beautiful birds wheeling in the sky. Long after all others had ceased, the sisters waltzed on, and finally stopped, panting, almost at the side of Carrington.

I saw him smilingly bend and offer his arm to Julia. I saw her look of gratified pleasure. Then they walked slowly away, she breathlessly fanning herself, and he stooping to whisper to her. As I beheld all this I felt a sharp pain in

my heart, as if a knife had been run through it.

He had not even noticed me, for he must have seen me, and seeing, must have recognized me. This thought, galling as it was, came opportunely; it braced my spirit up, and enabled me to proceed with my task.

If I had required any further proof of the relations between Julia and Carrington, it was soon given; for, after a slight interval, Julia re-appeared, returning from the conservatory whither she and Carrington had bent their steps; and suddenly leaving his arm, she ran prettily up to me, and asked me to play a waltz again. "Let it be your liveliest, my dear," she said.

Her extreme amiability to me, whom she generally treated almost with scorn, showed her overflowing happiness. I comprehended all, at once. She was to waltz with Carrington.

And this told more to me than a thousand words. I had often heard Carrington say that he admired the waltz, but thought it ought to be confined to husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, or other near or dear connexions: and I had never known him to deviate in practice from this opinion. During all our acquaintance he had never ventured to ask me to be his partner. His waltzing with Julia was, therefore, a proof to me of their engagement.

Imagine a criminal on the rack, who, by some devilish mechanism, is himself made the instrument of his own torture: imagine this, and you have some idea of my situation! I played on, scarcely aware what I did. At first I tried not to look, but a spell was on me, and as the musical rustle of Julia's dress approached, and I heard her soft panting as she floated by in Carrington's arms, I could not control myself, but followed the movements of the waltzers, as if some magnetic power emanating from their persons, attracted me invincibly.

By a sort of tacit consent no other couple was on the floor; and every eye, therefore, was on Julia and Carrington. If she was the perfection of grace in woman, he was her equal in it as a man; their motion, as they glided around the room, was music personified; it seemed some fair vision of enchantment, vivified by the spirit of love. All control over myself gradually passed from me. I played faster and faster. The waltzers whirled now where they had glided. Julia's eyes drooped to the floor, or were only raised in stealthy glances to Carrington's face: her brow as well as cheek, was covered with a brilliant crimson; she looked as if to have died in those arms would have been bliss. I grew dizzy again, but, with a strong effort, rallied myself, and found I was playing slower and slower; while the waltzers circling more and

more languidly around, at last almost imperceptibly ceased. Julia, as if exhausted, sank back into the corner of a sofa, and Carrington, bending over her, fanned her softly.

I could endure no more. I had concealed my weakness so far, but I knew not how soon I should betray myself. Mrs. Warrenne was standing by the door leading into the hall, and I rose and walked hurriedly toward her.

"My head is aching terribly," I said, speaking very fast—and in truth my poor brain felt as if it would split—"do excuse me for the rest of the evening, Mrs. Warrenne."

She looked at me in astonishment: my eagerness, as well as my presumption amazed her: she was about to speak, perhaps to order me back to the piano, for her brow clouded; but I did not wait for an answer: the whole world could not have forced me to return into that hateful parlor: I brushed by her; and, flying up stairs, ran like a deer to my own room, where I locked and double-locked the door.

I threw myself on the bed, in an agony of emotions. Shame, anger, and jealousy, by turns, raged in my heart. All that I had suffered in my desolate and persecuted childhood was nothing to this blow.

I now knew myself for the first time. I had believed, all along, that I had ceased to love Carrington. But it was not so. My passion had been rebuked and reasoned down, but its germ had never been entirely eradicated. Now, however, the axe had been laid to the root of the tree, and, lest that should not be sufficient, fire had seared what the steel had left.

"For what was I born?" I said, in agony, "suffering and disappointment have been my lot all my days. There is no happiness for me on earth. Would I were dead!"

Does this seem extravagant? There may be many, even of my own sex, who will think so; but there are others, who, having wrestled like myself alone with the enemy, will respect my weakness; and to these I commit my justification.

Where a woman loves, and with a love worthy of her, it is like plucking out her heart to blight that love. Pride may teach her concealment; but she suffers none the less. Time may soothe her pangs in part; but, at the first, she does not care to live. A strong nature will rise superior to its desolating fate, as the oak recovers after the tempest has passed; but still the ravages of the storm will leave their traces.

I am not speaking of the passing fancy of a mere girl, or of the romantic ravings of a silly mind; but of the deeper emotion of womanhood, where the object of hope is woven, as it were, into heart and intellect, so that the wrenching of it away, affects both forever.

As earth has no other blow as terrible for woman, so earth affords no consolation. For hours I writhed in agony, in that solitary room, stifling my groans with the bed-clothes; for my will, though it could not entirely prevent, was still strong enough to check these weak manifestations of my sufferings.

Prisoners on the wheel, it is said, become dulled finally to the torture; and at last I grew callous too.

Then conscience awoke, and remorse. "Where," I cried, "had been my trust in heaven during all these hours? Had I forgotten God? Had I overlooked the sufferings of one greater than I, and who, in agonies more terrible, had shamed my weakness? 'He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers was dumb, so he opened not his mouth.'"

I sank, awed and abashed, to my knees.

Yet I could not pray. In vain I sought words: it seemed as if I dared not entreat heaven; for I had weakly wished for death, forgetting that it is easier to die than to suffer. At last the solemn language of the Litany, which I had listened to a thousand times in the services of my church, came up to my recollection. I cried,

"By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost——"

Never burst response from more fervent lips than now from mine; and with the supplication comfort came down on my soul, like a flood of heavenly light. Wild, yet sweet tears, gushed from me.

Toward morning I fell asleep, exhausted. The breakfast gong aroused me. I rose. The birds were singing under my window, and the trees were brilliant with rain-drops; for there had been a thunder storm in the night, and before I slept, but, in my agony, I had not heard it. Everything was fresh and happy; and, for a moment, I felt cheerful too. But suddenly I saw too figures walking on the avenue: they were those of Julia and Carrington; and immediately it seemed as if darkness shut in the heavens from pole to pole.

It needed all the consolation I could derive from on high, to make that day supportable to me; and, even with all, I felt jaded physically, mentally like one in some feverish dream.

During the morning Mrs. Warrenne came into the school-room.

"Is your head-ache better?" she said, with cold severity. "Your extraordinary departure, last evening, created some remark, a thing I should not like to happen again."

Did Carrington notice it, was my immediate reflection? Could he have entirely overlooked



me? Occupied with these thoughts, I was silent and made no reply. This taciturnity appeared to irritate Mrs. Warrene, for she resumed, with some asperity.

“When I send for you again, Miss, I shall

expect you to remain until the dancing is over—Julia, poor girl, had to take your place—I will have no airs in my household.” Thus speaking, she sailed from the room.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

## TWO SCENES

## IN THE LIFE OF A CITY BELLE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

## SCENE FIRST.

"Isn't she a glorious creature?" said my young friend Merwyn, glancing, as he spoke, toward a beautiful girl named Florine Malcolm, the daughter of a merchant reputed to be rich. We were at a party, and the object of remark sat, or rather reclined near us on a sofa, with a graceful abandon, or rather indolence, in her whole air and attitude, that indicated one born and raised in idleness and luxury.

"She is a fine looking girl, certainly," I replied.

"Fine looking!" said my enthusiastic young friend, in surprise, half inclined to be offended at the coldness with which I expressed myself. "Fine looking, indeed! She's a perfect Hebe; a very impersonation of youth and beauty."

"No one can deny that she is a very lovely and beautiful girl," said I, to this. "But she lacks animation."

"What you speak of as a fault, I consider her greatest charm. I never met any one so free from all vulgar hurry and excitement. An exquisite ease distinguishes her actions, and she reminds you, in nearly everything, of those courtly ladies who give such a charm to foreign aristocratic society. Certainly, I have not met, in this country, with any one who has so perfectly the air of a high-bred lady as Florine Malcolm."

To understand this, perfectly, the reader must be told that Merwyn had recently returned from a tour through Europe, whither he had been permitted to go by a wealthy father, and where he had discovered, like most of our young men who venture abroad, that in our forms of social intercourse, and in all that gives fashionable society its true excellence and attractiveness, we are sadly deficient. Foreign manners, habits, and dress were brought home and retained by the young man, who, as a natural consequence, became a favorite among the ladies, and was thus encouraged in his silly imitations of things anti-American, and, therefore, in America ridiculous. In the eyes of sober-minded, sensible people, who did not know him well enough to see that there was a more substantial groundwork in his character than all this would lead a casual observer to infer, Merwyn was viewed as a mere fop, whose brains had grown out upon his upper lip in the shape of a moustache.

Such a man was my friend, Henry Merwyn. I knew his better qualities, and esteemed them; at the same time that I saw his weaknesses, and bore with them for the sake of the good that was in him. He had been raised in a sickly atmosphere, and his mind had taken an unhealthy tone; but he was honorable, and rigidly just in all his actions toward others.

As for the young lady he so warmly admired—Miss Florine Malcolm—I only knew her as we know those into whose society we are but occasionally thrown. She was a fine, showy girl, with a face of more than ordinary beauty; but, to one of my tastes, uninteresting for the very reason that she proved so charming to Merwyn. This genteel languor, this elegant indolence, this distinguishing repose, never much suited my fancy: I like to see the soul flow into the bodily organism, and thrill its every nerve with life and sentiment. I like to see the eye burn, the lips quiver, and the whole face glow with animating thought. This makes beauty tenfold more beautiful; and gives to even plainness a charm.

"By a high-bred lady," I replied to Merwyn's particular praise of Miss Malcolm, "you mean, I presume, a woman who is entirely artificial."

"No," he quickly answered, "you put a construction on my words that I do not acknowledge to be fair. By a high-bred lady, I mean one who possesses that peculiar ease and grace, that exquisite repose, and that charming elegance of manner that comes from a refined taste and long association with those who move in the highest rank in society. In fact, it is hard to fix in words all that goes to make up a well-bred lady; but, when you meet her, you know her at a glance."

"And you say Miss Malcolm comes nearer to the high-bred, courtly lady, than any woman it has been your fortune to meet on this side of the Atlantic?"

"She does. In Paris or London she would find herself at home in the first circles of fashion. Now just look at Miss Watson, who sits near her, bolt upright, and stiff as a post; and then observe how gracefully Florine reclines on those cushions like a very queen. There you have the exact difference between a mere vulgar girl, and a true lady."

There was a difference between the two individuals thus referred to—a very marked difference. Miss Watson looked like a girl of thought and action, while the other reposed languidly among the cushions of a sofa, the very picture of indolence.

"I see nothing vulgar about Miss Watson," said I. "And I know that there is nothing vulgar about her. She is a true lady in every sense of the word."

Merwyn half vexed me by his dissenting silence.

Just then he observed that Miss Malcolm looked pale. Going over quickly to where she was, he inquired if she were not well, and learned that some particular perfume used by a lady who sat near, was so unpleasant as to make her feel faint. He immediately proposed that she should go into an adjoining room where were fewer persons, and get a place near one of the windows, offering his arm at the same time. She arose, and I saw her pass out slowly. She was in good health, in fact, in the very prime and vigor of young life; yet, surrounded as she was by every luxury and elegance, she had grown inactive, and felt even a small effort as burdensome. Trifling causes affected her; and she imagined a physical inability to do a thousand things that might have been done with scarcely an effort.

The very sympathy and concern manifested by Merwyn, who was the lover of Florine, made her feel that she was really indisposed; and she languidly reclined on the sofa to which he had conducted her, with the air of an invalid. Finding that she did not grow any better, Merwyn, in a little while, proposed that she should go home, and had a carriage ordered. Wandering into the apartment to which they had gone, I saw him bring her shawl, without which she could not pass into the dressing-room for fear of cold, and saw her meet the attention with a half averted face, and a want of effort, that made me feel as if I would like to have aroused her by means of the wires from an electric battery.

"A beautiful couple they will make," said I to myself, as Florine arose and went out, leaning heavily on the arm of the young man, "to pass through the storms and over the rough places of this troublesome world. A summer breeze will be too rough for that young creature, and the odor of violets too stimulating for her nerves."

A few months subsequent to this they were married, and not long afterward I removed from the city, and did not see them again for some years. But, I learned, in the meantime, with sincere regret, that in a great "commercial crisis" through which the country passed, both of the families of this young couple had been reduced from affluence to comparative poverty. A sigh for the human summer flowers I have

mentioned, was my simple response to the news. A couple of years afterward I met them again.

## SCENE SECOND.

DURING a journey through the western part of Ohio, I had occasion to stop for a few days in the little town of R—. On the day after my arrival, a man whose face struck me as being familiar, passed the door of the tavern in which I was standing. A sort of doubtful recognition took place on both sides, but neither of us being certain as to the other's identity, we did not speak, and the man passed on. I looked after him as he moved down the street, wondering in my mind who he could be, when I saw him stop, and after appearing to hesitate about something, turn round and walk back toward the hotel. He was a young man, plainly dressed, and looked as if he were a clerk in a store, or, it might be, a small store-keeper himself. As he came back, I fixed my eyes upon his face, trying to make out who it was who bore such familiar features.

"My old friend Merwyn!" I exclaimed, as he paused in front of where I stood.

He called my name in return, and then we grasped each others' hands eagerly.

"The last man in the world I expected to meet," said I.

"And, certainly, I as little expected to meet you," was returned. "This is indeed a pleasure! When did you arrive, and how long do you stay in R—?"

"I came here yesterday, and hope to resume my journey to-morrow."

"Not so soon!" Merwyn said, still tightly holding my hand. "You must stay longer."

"I am doubtful as to that," I returned. "But is this your place of sojourn in the world?"

"Yes, for the present, seeing that I can't find a better."

There was a manly cheerfulness in the way this was said, which I could not have believed it possible for the young man to feel, under the great change of circumstances that had taken place.

"And your lady?" I felt some hesitation even while I asked this question.

"Very well, thank you!" was cheerfully replied. "We live a mile or two from town, and you must go out and spend a night with us before you leave. Florine will be delighted to see you."

"It will be quite as pleasant for me to meet her," I could but answer; yet even while I spoke I felt that our meeting must remind the wife of my friend so strongly of the past, as to make it anything but pleasant.

"How long have you lived here?"

"About two years."

"It is almost the last place in which I expected to meet you. What are you doing?"

"Merchandizing in a small way. I had no profession, when kind fortune knocked us all on the head, and so had to turn my hand to the first thing that offered, which happened to be a clerkship in a store at three hundred and fifty dollars a year. This was barely enough to keep soul and body together; yet, I was thankful for so much, and tried to keep down a murmuring spirit. At the end of a year, having given every satisfaction to my employer, he said to me one day—"you have shown far more business capacity than I thought you possessed, and, I think, are the very man I want to go out west with a stock of goods. Can you command any capital?" "Not a dollar, I fear," was my reply. "I'm sorry for that," said he, "for I want a man who is able to take an interest in the business. Don't you think you could raise a couple of thousand dollars in cash?" I shook my head, doubtfully. We had a good deal more conversation on the subject.

"When I went home, I mentioned to my wife what Mr. L——, my employer, had said, and we talked much about the proposition. I expressed a great deal of regret at not being able to furnish capital, as the offer I had received was plainly an advantageous one, and would give me a fair start in the world. "Would you be willing to go off to the west?" I asked of Florine, while we talked over the subject. "Wherever you think it best to go, I will go cheerfully," was her brave answer. Thus far she had borne our change of fortune with a kind of heroism that more than anything else helped to sustain me. We were living with my family, and had one child. My father, of whose misfortunes you are aware, had obtained the office of president in an insurance company, with a salary of two thousand a year, and this enabled him still to keep his family around him, and, though luxuries had to be given up, his income afforded every comfort. We had a room with them, and, though my income was small, we had all that health and peace of mind required.

"On the day after the conversation with my wife about the west, she met me on coming home to dinner with so happy, yet meaning a smile on her face, that I could not help inquiring what it meant. As I sat down by her side, she drew from her pocket a small roll of bank bills, and, handing them to me, said—"there is the capital you want." I took the money, and, unrolling it in mute surprise, counted out the sum of two thousand dollars! "Where did this come from?" I inquired. She glanced across the room, and my eyes followed the direction hers had taken. I missed something. It was her piano! "Explain yourself, Florine," I said. "That is easily done,"

she replied, as she looked tenderly in my face. "I have sold my piano and watch, my diamond pin, bracelet and ring, and every article of jewelry and *bijouterie* in my possession, but *this*," holding up the wedding ring, "and there you have the money." I cannot tell you how much I was affected by this. But, no matter. I used the two thousand dollars in the way proposed, and here I am. Come, walk down to my store with me, and let us chat a little about old times, there."

I went, as invited, and found Merwyn with a small but well selected stock of goods in his store, and all the evidences of a thriving business around him.

"You must go home with me this afternoon," said he, as I arose to leave him, after having had an agreeable talk for an hour. "I live, as I told you, a short distance in the country; so you will stay all night, and can come in with me in the morning. The stage leaves here at five o'clock, and passes within a short distance of my house. Florine will be delighted to see you."

I consented, well pleased with this arrangement, and, at five o'clock was seated in the stage by the side of my old friend, who bore as little resemblance to one of your curled, perfumed, and moustached exquisites—what he had once been—as could well be imagined. His appearance was plain, substantial, and business-like.

Half an hour's ride brought us to our stopping place.

"I live off to the right here," said Merwyn, as we left the stage, "beyond that piece of wood. Ten minutes' walk will bring us to my door. We prefer the country for several reasons, the principal one of which is economy. Our cottage, with six acres of ground, costs us only fifty dollars a year, and we have the whole of the land worked on shares by a neighbor; thus more than clearing our rent. Then we have plenty of fruit and milk for ourselves and children, and fresh air and health into the bargain."

"But don't Mrs. Merwyn find it very lonesome out here?" I inquired.

"Oh, no. We have two children, and they, with a very clever young woman who lives with us more as a friend than a domestic, although we pay her wages, give Florine plenty of society through the day, and I come in by night-fall, and sometimes earlier, to make the evenings all she could wish. At least, I have Florine's own declaration for this." The last sentence was uttered with a smile.

As we walked along, the means of my meeting with Mrs. Merwyn, turned my thoughts back to other times. A beautiful girl was before me, languidly reclining upon a sofa, overcome by the extract of some sweet herbs, the perfume of which had fallen unharmoniously upon the sense.

A hot-house plant, how was it possible that she could bear the cold, bracing atmosphere of such a life as that she was now living? When last I saw her, she was but a tender summer flower, on whom the warm sun shone daily, and into whose bosom the night dews came softly with refreshing coolness.

Silently I walked along with my mind full of such thoughts, when an opening in the woods through which we were passing, gave me a glimpse of a woman's figure, standing on the second rail of a fence, and apparently on the look out for some one. The intervening trees quickly hid her again from my view. In a minute or so afterward we emerged from the trees but a short distance from the woman I had seen, who was looking in another direction from that in which we were coming. We were close upon her before she observed us. Then the voice of Merwyn, who called "Florine!" startled her, and she turned upon us her beautiful young face, glowing with health, surprise and pleasure. I paused in astonishment. Was that the indolent, languid city belle, who could scarcely sit erect even with the aid of cushions, now standing firm and straight on a fence-rail, and looking more lovely and graceful than she had ever seemed in my eyes?

She recognized me in a moment, and, springing from the rail, came bounding toward me, full to overflowing of life and spirits. Grasping my hand, she expressed the warmest pleasure at seeing an old face, and asked me a dozen questions before I could answer one.

I found them occupying a neat little bird's-nest of a cottage, in which were two as sweet little children as I have ever seen. While I sat and talked with Merwyn, holding one child upon my knee, and he the other, Florine busied herself in getting the supper. Her only domestic was away. Ever and anon I caught a glimpse of her as she passed in and out of the adjoining room where she had spread the table. A very long time did not elapse before I sat down with my old friends to a meal that I enjoyed as well as any I have ever eaten. The warm, white biscuits were baked by Florine; the sweet butter she had herself churned, so she said, and the cake and preserves were her own.

"How am I surprised at all this," said I, after tea. "How is it possible for you to be cheerful and happy under such a change? How was it possible for you to come so efficiently into a mode of life, the very antipodes of the one to which you were born, and in which you were educated?"

"Misfortune," replied Merwyn, "brings out whatever is efficient in our characters. This has been particularly the case with us. We had both led artificial lives, and had false views of almost everything, when, at a blow, the golden palace in which we had lived was dashed in pieces. We were then thrown out into the world, with nothing to depend upon but our individual resources, which were, at first, you may well believe, exceedingly small. The suddenness with which our fashionable friends turned from us, and the entire exclusion from fashionable society that followed, opened our eyes to the utter worthlessness of much that we had looked upon as of primary consideration. The necessity of our circumstances turned our thoughts, at the same time, to things of real moment, the true importance of which grew daily more apparent. Thus we were prepared for other steps that had to be taken, and which, I am glad to say, we were able to take cheerfully. We now lead a true and useful life, and I am sure Florine will join me in saying, that it is a happier life than we ever led before."

"Yes, with all my heart," replied the young wife. "I have good health, good spirits, and a clear conscience; and, without these, no one can be happy."

"Still," remarked Merwyn, "we look to growing better off in the world, and hope, one day, to be surrounded by at least a portion of the elegance and luxury of early times. But until that day comes, we will enjoy the good things of life that fall to our lot; and should it never come, we will have lost nothing by vain anticipations."

When I parted with my old friends on the next day, I felt that their lot was, beyond comparison, more blessed than it would have been had not misfortune visited them; and wished, from my heart, that all who had met with similar reverses would imitate their good example. Still, I wondered at the change I had seen; and, at times, could hardly realize its truth.